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World Reformation Activities of the Dark God — Loving Humans So Much, I Reincarnated in One —

Arc 4: Earth Hero

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Chapter 89: Visiting the mother

I decided on taking a bit of time to destroy the monsters.

They are only harmful for humans, and only convenient tools for the Gods to ensure their own existence.

In order to cut off the influence of the Gods that's only a pain for the humans, I decided that there's the need to eliminate this pseudo-lifeforms called monsters.

And so, what has to be done in order to eliminate monsters? When I was searching for this specific question, the answer that came out was to 'defeat the Mother Monsters'.

What are Mother Monsters?

In the first place, monsters are pawns that were created by the Gods for their own sake.

But it would be a pain for the Gods to continue creating thousands of monsters eternally and it wouldn't be efficient.

So, those Gods first created a 'monster that gives birth to monsters'.

By creating that, it will continue producing monsters on its own. It would make things a lot easier for the Gods.

Those 'monsters that produce monsters' are the Mother Monsters.

The fire, water, earth, and wind Gods agreed to this idea of monsters and church, and created Mother Monsters, making the numbers equal to the amount of Base Element Gods, four.

Earth Mother Monster; Water Mother Monster; Fire Mother Monster; Wind Mother Monster.

...Are apparently the ones that exist.

In order to completely separate the harm that are monsters from the world, there's the need to eliminate all these four.

According to a certain source of information, the four Base Element Gods have been weakening recently, so if we manage to defeat the Mother Monsters, they won't be able to create another one again.

In other words, if we do battle four times, a fitting amount of monsters will be leaving the surface world for good.

If we cut off the source that supplies monsters and defeat the ones that remain, the number of monsters will decrease for sure, and by the end, it will become zero.

If the final supplying line of Prayer Energy for the four Base Elements is cut off, they won't be able to meddle with the humans anymore.

The important points all lie in the Mother Monsters. And so, I -Kuromiya Haine-want to eliminate them all as soon as possible, but...there's one problem.

Where are the Mother Monsters anyways?

Whether it is a God or a monster, in order to give it a beating, I have to go to where it is. But the crucial location of the Mother Monsters is completely unknown for me.

It is certain that they are somewhere around this world, but I have no clues or an idea of where they could be.

I do have the Light Goddess Inflation at my side, but...it seems Yorishiro also doesn't have any ideas, and it looked like our reformation plan had encountered a wall right at the beginning.

But there's only one thing I know that might help out in this.

A way to find the Mother Monsters...or more like, one guy that seems like he would know the location of the Mother Monsters.

...No, maybe it is more accurate to call him a critter.

And so, I am in the city of Muspelheim where the Fire Church headquarters are located.

What's there is...a certain cow.

(Ah~, how peaceful, how peaceful~.)

Guided by a member of the Fire Church, I reunited with this guy after a good while.

Well, even if I say that, how long has it been? Before that reunion there was a 1,600 years of blank space, so this might not be considered that long compared to that.

(...Oh, isn't the one there my brethren, the Dark God Entropy? Hey hey~.)

The cow talks to me in a telepathic-like voice that only I can hear.

This guy is a cow.

Four hoofed legs, a body that has a decent amount of meat, has horns, and also a tail. But it is slightly different from the cows commonly known, its skin is hard as steel, and because of that, its surface color is kind of metallic.

Well, that's a given. Even if it is a cow, it is a cow-shaped monster.

It is called the Fire Cow Phalaris among the humans.

It is a vicious monster that changed the once wealthy mountainous district into scorched earth and settled there, but because of many things happening, it is now confined in the Fire Church.

Its frame that was once as big as a mountain is now on the size of a calf.

It could be said that this is a good size to keep it indoors.

And so, the problem with this Fire Cow Phalaris is that...

(...Well, how to say this... It has been a while, Fire God.) (Haine)

(Yeah, it has been a while while~.) (Nova)

The cow was lying on the floor and answers me only with his tail swinging left and right.

That's right, this cow-shaped monster may be a monster, but inside it there's the soul of a God.

One of the five Gods of Creation and four Base Elements; the one who governs fire, the God Nova.

Just like how I -the Dark God Entropy-incarnated into a human as Kuromiya Haine, this guy also incarnated into a monster even when he is a God.

If I had to speak the reason why he did something like that, it would be...in order to punish the humans that have stopped fawning on him.

For that reason, he went through the trouble of incarnating as a monster, and with the power of a God and the big frame of a monster, he was about to destroy the city, but instead got beaten up by me recently.

Normally, it would have been proper to destroy that cow monster's body into pieces and stop its breath, but I purposely didn't do it and kept him alive.

He is a God and his true essence is in his soul, so even if I destroy the monster body, his soul would only return to the God Realm.

That's why I didn't kill him and decided on keeping the God soul inside the monster.

With several excuses lined up, I had the Fire Church take custody of it, and in a sense, I had sealed him here but...

(Ah~~a morning nap sure is relaxing relaxing~~.) (Nova)

.....

...Isn't he feeling way too at home here?

(Oi, Fire God Nova.) (Haine)

(Yes, I am the Fire God.) (Nova)

Are you really a God?

Haven't you degraded to livestock?

This guy is currently caged inside a cell that the Fire Church people made specially for him.

But, even if I call it a cell, it looks unexpectedly comfy, and the space inside is on the level of a hall. It is definitely bigger than a one-person house in Apollon City or Muspelheim.

Inside this remarkable place, the place to sleep and the water is properly prepared; the other space is carefully layered with lawn.

Its surrounding may indeed be caged, but this thoroughly well-made environment...is by no means something I would think of as a jail to imprison a captured monster.

...It is more like...the home of a pet that's being treasured dearly?

Chapter 90: Visiting the Fire God

(...You see, Fire God...I certainly did say that I would seal you in that body of yours. But I actually didn't really mean it at all. Because you know, if you wanted to kill yourself, you could have done it anytime to get out of your body. If you wanted to, you could have run at full speed towards a wall and break your head, and that would easily let you return to the God Realm.

It was more like, trying to annoy you.

I actually came here with low expectations, you know. When I arrived here, I thought I would be hearing a: 'It died a long time ago', by the people of the Fire Church. I was prepared for that.) (Haine)

But in reality, he was still plenty alive, moreover, he is totally feeling at home.

What happened? Hey Fire God, just what in the hell happened?

(You do have a point.) (Nova)

The God, or more like, the cow answers me while still resting on the lawn inside the cell.

(At first, I also thought that something like this was just humiliating and was filled with resentment. Because you know, it is me, the Fire God Nova. And to top it all off, I was turned into a show for the human children in such a cow body. I was going 'like hell I can take this'. My God pride was in shambles, you know.) (Nova)

Must have been.

This cow monster being the Fire God Nova is a truth that only I as a God as well could have noticed.

There's no way for the other humans to know. Not even the light hero Karen-san and the fire hero Mirack who helped in defeating this cow monster.

With my dark matter, this guy, who had lost its battle power, has become completely harmless. 'In that case, if this were to be exhibited alive to the

general populace, the achievement of the heroes would be on plain view and be easier to have a feel of it, and it will also increase the reputation of the Fire Church', is what I think I said.

I myself only said some random stuff in the spur of the moment so I don't remember that well.

For me, the important part is that the Fire God was sealed in that body, and the exhibition part was just a pretext for it.

(Thanks to that wild proposition of yours, my life as a customer attracting cow had begun. My believers encaged me in this boring cell and am being exposed to more than hundreds of people's eyes everyday.) (Nova)

The members of the Fire Church itself wouldn't in their wildest dreams think that the monster they are exhibiting is the God they worship.

Now that I think about it, in my way here, I saw a sign that said: 'Fire Cow Phalaris in public display!'

By the way, it seems like the public display time is over for today, and in this space, there's only the cow in question, me, and the old lady doing the cleaning.

I am in outline one of the people that subjugated Phalaris, and I am also acquainted with the fire hero Mirack, so I was let in as an exception.

(Well, it was just a pain all around for me. I thought about finding a chance one day to kill myself and return to the God Realm. In the time I was looking for that chance, the days passed, and I noticed something incredible.) (Nova)

(Something incredible?) (Haine)

(While I'm here, the food just comes on its own.) (Nova)

(Oi.) (Haine)

(No no, it is indeed incredible you know. Well, the current me may look like a cow, but I am a monster, so I don't actually need to eat though. But the humans don't know what monsters eat, so they bring a lot of things. Like dry grass, vegetables, peas, potatoes, carrots; with all these variety coming at me, my everyday life has become unexpectedly fun you see!) (Nova)

(Uuuhm.....is that so.) (Haine)

(And so, well, I don't have much to do anyways even if I return to the God Realm, and compared to that, here I can get delicious food without doing anything, so I thought that maybe being here is fine...and so, lately, I have discovered something incredible. You see, when the waiter in charge comes with the food and I lift up my front legs high up...they give me a lot more food! Isn't that awesome?!)(Nova)

Isn't that just you being taught some tricks...

And instead of calling the person a waiter, it is more like the breeder...

(Ah~lazing around on the lawn is comfortable~~. Why did I burn the whole vegetation growing there in my time in the wild and decided on sleeping on top of rocks and earth?)(Nova)

(Well, if you say that's fine with you, then that's good.)(Haine)

It looks like the Fire God Nova has found his life as a pet cow surprisingly good.

This might be good in its own way. It might raise the chances of him answering what I will be asking now after all.

(Hm? Ah, now that I think about it, why did you come here today?)(Nova)

The cow slowly gets up -the Fire God in the shape of a cow.

(You are not the type who would just come here for fun after all. Visiting a hated enemy of yours that sealed you in the past, just what was your aim when coming here on your own?)(Nova)

It looks like he still has some dignity as a God remaining.

(It is good you catch up fast. I came here to ask you something. I will be straight here. Where are the Mother Monsters?)(Haine)

(Hoh~.)(Nova)

(Monsters that give birth to monsters. The ones who created the Mother Monsters were the four Base Element Gods including you. It wouldn't be strange for you as one of the creators to know where they are, right?)(Haine)

(To think you would look for them... I see, so you are planning on eliminating

them?) (Nova)

(Yeah. It has been 18 years since the seal was undone and I came back. On top of that, it has only been a few weeks since the time I left my village and had a look at the world but, even so, I understood something for sure.

This world already has no need for Gods.

In this world, Gods staying here would only be a bother. I decided on thoroughly cutting off the evil that connects the Gods with the humans.) (Haine)

(It was inevitable, inevitable. You, who are an unbelievably convenient existence for the humans, to reach that conclusion was inevitable. It is true that I joined in on that cajolery of Coacervate. And what was created from that is the Fire Mother Monster -the immortal bird, Phoenix.) (Nova)

Immortal bird, Phoenix...

(It is a bird that has its whole body covered in flames, and I think it is one size bigger than the past Fire Cow Phalaris. Burning its own body with its own flames, it gives birth to many monsters from those ashes. From that special characteristic it has, not only is it not possible to kill it with the same fire element, no element is able to kill it. Even if its whole body is destroyed, the ashes still remain, and from those ashes, a new Phoenix will be born.) (Nova)

(Hence the immortal part huh.) (Haine)

(But your dark matter might be an exception. With that damn matter of yours that erases all elements completely, it might be possible to kill the immortal bird without even leaving ashes...) (Nova)

(That's quite the unexpected honest talk coming from you. Well, that's fine. And so, where's Phoenix?) (Haine)

(Don't know.) (Nova)

(Eh?) (Haine)

(It is true that I am the one who created Phoenix, but that doesn't mean I know where it is. It might be a pseudo-lifeform, but it is still a living being, and

has without doubt a will of its own. It will go wherever it wants, and more so since it is a bird with wings. It can go anywhere in the world.) (Nova)

(What's with that, you are of no help. After all that suggestive behaviour, you still left me with no clues huh.) (Haine)

(Don't be spoiled, Dark God. In the first place, why would I even have to divulge everything to you anyways?) (Nova)

(Right, we totally don't get along.

It was a complete waste of time. But well, since I came all the way here to Muspelheim, I will go eat with the Ignis Militant corps I got along with last time.) (Haine)

(Well, wait there. Since you are here, let me tell you one more thing.) (Nova)

(What is it, cow? If it's complains, I will take on those complains of yours physically as well if you want.) (Haine)

(It is true that I don't know the location of the Mother Monster I created, but I didn't say anything about not knowing where the others are, you know.) (Nova)

Eh?

(Especially since that one is famous after all. In the first place, it is a type that can't move unlike my bird. The Earth Mother Monster, Grandma Wood. Do you want to know where it is?) (Nova)

Chapter 91: Wonder Tree

“...Grandma Wood?” (Haine)

I repeat the name that the cow spoke of.

(That’s right, the Earth Mother Monster that the Mother Earth Mantle created.) (Nova)

Nova continues speaking in the thought channel that only I can hear.

I am also conversing with him in the thought channel, so if this situation continues for long, the people around might think that I am a weird guy that really likes to admire the cow-shaped monster, but it looks like this is no time to be worrying about that.

(Just as the name states, it is a giant tree-type monster. Among the monsters, it is most likely the biggest one of them all. Mother Monsters are all originally big, but Grandma Wood is a whole level bigger even within that group.) (Nova)

(And you say you know its location? On top of that, you will be telling me about it?) (Haine)

(It is a tree to begin with. It can’t move from the place it was born. And, whether I tell you or not depends on your attitude.) (Nova)

(What, so there’s exchange conditions huh.) (Haine)

(Answer me a question. Why didn’t you seal me?) (Nova)

(Hm? I have.) (Haine)

(This pathetic thing can’t be called a seal. Not the type that you can return to the God Realm whenever you want if you wanted to; the real seal we did to you 1,600 years ago.) (Nova)

(Ah.)

(Your freedom was taken away for 1,600 years by it. In that new fight, I lost to you and our positions reversed. It was your chance to take your revenge, and yet, why didn’t you do it? You are one of the poles, moreover, the Dark God that possesses absolute advantage against the four Base Elements. If you

wanted to, you could have made a strong enough seal comparable to the seal we used five Gods to make.) (Nova)

(No, I can't. In the first place, the one who created that seal was the underhanded Coacervate.) (Haine)

(Eh? The cowardly Coacervate?) (Nova)

(That's right, that low-life Coacervate. That's why, I don't know how to do any sealing, and even if I knew, there's no need to go that far, right?) (Haine)

(Wa...)

(Honestly speaking, I was pissed by you and Coacervate, that's why I beat you both up. If I still held a grudge after beating you up, that would just mean I can't control my own hatred.

But after seeing the past of you guys, I learned that you will certainly be causing problems to the humans, so I will be properly cutting off that connection you have with them though.

That's the reason for defeating the Mother Monsters.) (Haine)

(...)

(What's with you, going all silent. If you have been convinced, tell me the location of Grandma Wood already.) (Haine)

(...Shut up! Idiot, die!) (Nova)

For some reason, I was grandly insulted.

What, so you really won't be telling me.

While I was thinking what I should do, I look at my surroundings and...I found something good.

"Sorry~, can I give this to him?" (Haine)

"It is fine. But only a little bit, okay? His meal later won't enter if you give him too much after all."

Receiving the permission of the person that was cleaning a corner of the place and seemed to be the person in charge of him, I put my hand in a bucket and take out a carrot.

(Come on~ please tell me with this.) Is what I say as I flaunt the carrot at him.

(?!!!!!)

The cow raised up high, and lifted his front legs high up.

Looks like it was very effective.

(D-Don't look down on me, Dark God! You see, today, there will be students from a school close to here coming for an excursion and will be experiencing giving me food. In order to show the kids my special technique, gorging, I am keeping my stomach empty!!) (Nova)

Just how accustomed are you to your current lifestyle...

With all that, I was able to get the necessary information.

The location of the Earth Mother Monster, Grandma Wood.

I still don't know the location of the other three Mother Monsters, but let's crush the ones that I know of first.

And so, the Grandma Wood in question is a tree-shaped monster and is the type that once it is placed in one location, it will never move from there, which helps me out a lot.

With the information I received of Nova, and comparing it with the present geography, I calculate in what place the objective is.

Doing that, I learned something unbelievable.

"Is that the Earth Mother Monster, Grandma Wood?" (Haine)

After concluding where it was, I swiftly fly towards the location.

What I encountered was...certainly the figure of a giant tree that surpasses my imagination.

It is truly big.

Even though my destination is still on the other side of a mountain, there's green at the other side of the mountain's summit.

That's most likely the green of leaves.

The leaves that grow thickly surpassed the size of the mountain and stressed its existence to me who was faraway.

A tree that's bigger than a mountain.

As if it is a pillar that supports the sky.

And also...

"What's at the base of that tree is...the city where the Earth Church headquarters is located, the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze?!" (Haine)

Looks like that's how it is.

While heading towards the place where the Earth Monster is, I, at the same time, am heading towards the Earth Church's headquarters.

Chapter 92: To the Mother Earth's bosom

Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze.

This city where the Earth Church is in, is far away from the Light capital, Apollon City; the Fire capital, Muspelheim; and the Water Capital, Hydra Ville. Because of that, it is a city that's isolated from cultural exchange.

Moreover, at the west of it there's the 'Nameless Desert', and if they want to go to other settlements, there's the danger that they would enter this area, so it made the people not want to move about which strengthened the isolation even more.

It is an isolated nation by nature, and from an outside perspective, it is practically an unexplored region riddled with mysteries.

That is the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze.

The city where the people that worship one of the five Gods of Creation, Mother Earth Mantle.

I am flying there alone with my flying machine.

"But, to think a Mother Monster would be right in the middle of a city where people live..." (Haine)

Ishtar Blaze is an enigmatic city, but it seems like the big tree at the center of the city is somewhat famous even in the outside settlements.

Even if they indeed don't have much cultural exchange, there's still travelers that come to the Earth capital at times when travelling around the world.

In the stories that they brag about, the first thing that comes out is the big tree that serves as the symbol of the city.

The people of the Light, Fire, and Water Churches as well, when I asked them about the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze, most of it was: 'ah, that city with the big tree huh. I don't know anything aside from that'.

And in truth, when I brought the information I got from Nova about Grandma Wood to Yorishiro, even she said: 'Eh, that was actually one?!' and was

surprised.

It is famous, but no one knows that this is one of the roots of those things called monsters. It seems like that's the state it is in.

"And I am just a few ways away from the city where Grandma Wood is. Let's push it till the destination." (Haine)

I turn to the back and say this cheerfully.

—No one is there.

Right, this time, I am the only one in this journey.

Even in this distance where I can already see the trunk of Grandma Wood, there's no one at my right or my left.

This is one of the big links that has to be severed in order to eradicate the monsters from this world, but in this journey, I wanted to wrap this out on my own, and because of it, I decided on going alone.

The light hero Karen-san, who I have always been with until now, for this time, I chose not to bring her with me. If I move with a hero, there's a lot of things that have to be accommodated first so it saves me in that part, and it could become a big matter later.

And so, this time, I am alone.

No well, isn't that good? My first journey alone. Let's go freely and carefreely without any constraints.

"Well then, everyone, let's go to the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze~~!!" (Haine)

Raising my hands high-up, I shout to the back.....

Ah right, there's no one.

...I am not feeling lonely, okay?!

At the mountains that are quite a bit far before arriving at Ishtar Blaze, I got down the flying machine and hid it in the thicket.

The reason why I am doing this is because Yorishiro gave me an advice in the

time I was departing.

‘Try your utmost to not bring any ethereal machines to Ishtar Blaze’, she said.

There was no detailed explanation.

Giving me small amounts of various pieces of information and saying hinting at things is truly just like her.

But Yorishiro is not the type to give advice thoughtlessly, so I should obediently follow what she said and leave the flying machine here.

It is in outline something that’s borrowed from the church, or more like, Yorishiro. If I break it, it is something that I definitely won’t be able to repay.

I camouflage it by placing grass on top of it and make a specific mark that only I would be able to tell it is one, and so, hiding complete.

Now then, let’s head to Ishtar Blaze by feet.

From what I saw when I was riding the flying machine, it would take around 1 day to reach there by feet.

Even so, if I was to go by feet from the very beginning, reaching her from Apollon City would have taken at the very least 1 month. I was able to arrive in only a few days, so the flying machine is still doing its job splendidly.

I could proceed in the ‘Nameless Desert’ without fearing it. Development really does make humans powerful.

Understanding how amazing the Ethereal era is once again, I continue onward, and at one point, the mountain road suddenly ended.

“Oh~~”

And then, there was an open field that extends as far as I could see...but it was a bit different.

“Oooh!”

This is not something that was made naturally. A green ground that was prepared with human hands; a plantation.

The sections are properly separated, and this agricultural land that had set crops growing from it were extending to the far horizon and from left and right

to a point where I can't even see the end from here.

What a big farming zone.

Until now, I have seen many cities like Apollon City, Muspelheim, and Hydra Ville.

As long as there's many humans living there, there's the need to supply their food in some way, and all settlements had their agricultural land in their surroundings.

But I have not seen an agricultural land as big as this one.

If this is all managed by Ishtar Blaze, this is not ordinary.

"The city that's under the divine protection of Mother Earth huh..." (Haine)

These words leaked out from my mouth naturally.

Mother Earth Mantle, who governs the earth, is the one who created the ground itself where the humans stand on.

In that sense, it can be said that, for humans, she is the God that is the most familiar with them.

The water blessing, the fire blessing, and even the wind blessing has to pass through the earth at least once before reaching the humans.

The earth is the mother of all living beings. That's why only Mantle is not simply called Earth God, but called with affection as Mother Earth.

The Earth Church that worships Mantle possessing such big farming land can be understandable.

On the plantations, I could see people that looked like peasants here and there, and I could feel liveliness that I wouldn't be able to see in just any agricultural land.

Peaceful and melodious; while thinking something like that, I walked on the road and then...for some reason, I felt a gaze.

Someone is watching me.

Thinking this, I looked around, and there, my eyes found another strange thing.

The shadow of someone. A silhouette in the shape of a human.

At first, I was so surprised by the ever-extending agricultural land that I didn't notice it, but it is quite big. A height that would require two adult men in order to match its size.

That's obviously not a human.

A doll?

A doll made of earth.

A giant earth doll was moving alone in the plantation.

"Could it be...a monster?!" (Haine)

The special trait of this pseudo-lifeforms called monsters is that they release divine power aura, but you can't feel the beat of a soul.

Sensing that irregularity, I noticed immediately that it was a monster, and after noticing one other thing, my alertness raised to its upper limit.

Close to the feet of that earth-humanoid monster was...a human!

An elderly *oba-san*. <granny>

Her legs have already gotten weak and she can't run at her full-speed. There's no way she can escape from that earth-humanoid.

And then, the earth-humanoid took a step.

At the direction of the Oba-san, as if saying 'I will crush you'.

"Watch out!!" (Haine)

I immediately ran there.

Chapter 93: Golem

“Watch out!!”

I run towards the place.

Towards the place where the old woman was about to be crushed under the step of the giant earth-humanoid.

I don't know the details, but there's no doubt that's a monster.

I somehow made it in time and stand in between the Oba-san and the earth-humanoid.

“Oh?”

I heard the voice of the Oba-san from behind.

There's no time to hesitate. If I take my time, not only the Oba-san, the surroundings will also suffer. I release dark matter and destroy the earth-humanoid without leaving any remains—is what I thought, but I felt a *gong* shock from my back.

“Guogh?!” (Haine)

I was hit by something from my back. Moreover, because it accurately hit my spine, it made a dangerously creaking sound and I fall in pain.

“Dunno who ya are, but don't go jumpin' out suddenly.”

The one hitting me was the Oba-san.

She gave me one hit with the cane she is holding, moreover, it seems that cane was stronger than I expected, the pain coursing through me was not letting me move at all.

As this happened, the earth-humanoid was approaching.

The steps that were going *doshin doshin* were sinking around half of its feet into the earth every time.

This is bad. ‘At this rate, the Oba-san and I will be crushed beneath this guy's feet!’, just when I thought of this...the earth-humanoid passes by the Oba-san

and I, and heads towards an unknown destination.

“...Eh? Wut?” (Haine)

When the earth-humanoid moves forward for a while, it turns around, and returns here.

“Hua?!”

I thought we would be crushed this time for sure, but as expected, the earth-humanoid passes by us, and after moving for a while, it turns back...and continues that process.

“Ya see, this plantation here...I had it take a rest last year. And so, I thought about planting somethin’ again this year, so before that, I be thinking ther’ be the need to mix the earth fer a bit ya see.”

The Oba-san says this with a mixed accent. <TL: Please treat me gently on the accent >-<. If there’s any sort of tips you can give me on that, I would appreciate it a lot.>

“Leaving it to that child is really comfortin’. My legs already roughed up ya see, just walkin’ with these legs won’t be mixing no earth. Ya can’t just suddenly stand on its way.”

Eh? For some reason, it has turned into me being scolded?

“B-But that’s a monster...” (Haine)

Because the pain in my back is still not going away, my speech is still not going back to normal.

She looks like that, but her strength is impressive. Is this the hidden power of a farmer?

“...Could it be yer...an outsider?”

“Outsider?” (Haine)

“Talking about people that came from the outside. The first thin’ people who don’t know this place get surprised by is that after all. That child ya see, it’s called a Golem. The blessin’ of Mother Earth-sama.”

Saying this, the Oba-san points at the giant earth-humanoid that is still

continuing the plowing.

“...Golem?” (Haine)

“That’s right. See fer yerself. There’s some over there and there too.”

In the places where the Oba-san points at, there’s certainly big human-shaped shadows plowing the land, digging canals, helping out in the harvesting; they were working in the fields restlessly.

These so called Golems have a silhouette that’s practically identical to that of humans aside from the size, so in this flat agricultural land with such perspective in it, I ended up not noticing it.

But...eh? Golem? But, they are monsters, right?

The monsters are helping out in the farm?

“Oh my, yer quite the brave lad.”

Some time has passed since then, the pain in my back finally receded, and the Oba-san was treating me with tea.

While I was gazing at the Golem at the plantation.

“So ya misunderstood thinkin’ that I was being attacked by a Golem and went to save me eh. Looks like I did somethin’ bad to ya then. Thanks.”

“No, in the end, it was my misunderstanding, so I should be the one apologizing. Not only did I cause you trouble, I was even about to get in the way of your work.” (Haine)

“It’s fine, it’s fine~. Even a granny like me gets happy when a youn’ un tries to save her-sa ne. Here, eat some pickles too.”

“T-Thanks for the meal.” (Haine)

I was eating and drinking what was being brought to me.

A blue sky and a green plain that extends further than the eye can see. The sounds that enter my ears are the steps of the Golem that’s working on its own.

What a peaceful space.

I felt a gaze and look around. In the skies, there's the shadow of a bird of prey that might be an eagle or a hawk. It is probably aiming at the mice that might be running around the plantation.

"But well, most outsiders get surprised by it-sa ne. Humans and monsters bein' friendly."

"Those Golems, do they really not attack people?" (Haine)

"That's right. That child is just as good natured as ya-sa ne."

Maybe it has finished the plowing; the Golem that was moving back and forth only, for the first time stops its trajectory and heads to where we are.

"Thanks fer ya hard work."

When it arrives right in front of us, the Golem stops on its own, and the Oba-san seems to have begun touching the body of the Golem.

And then...

"Uwa?!"

The surface of the Golem suddenly had cracks appearing from it, moreover, this covered its whole body and, finally, it crumbles and becomes rubble.

"W-What was that?! What happened?!" (Haine)

"Calm down, youn' un. The work is over, so I had it take a rest-sa ne."

Saying this, there was one piece of brick in the hand of the Oba-san.

She didn't have something like that before though.

"This be the identity of the Golem-sa ne."

"Eh? This brick is?" (Haine)

I later learned that this brick is called a Life Block, also called as Golem Core.

Chapter 94: Utopia

“Ya see, ya have to write what ya want it to do in this Life Block.”

The Oba-san was writing something on the brick with a bamboo shoot or something like that. Maybe the surface is pretty soft.

“And then, ya throw it ta the earth.”

After doing that, earth begins to gather on the brick, swells big, and then, it steadily shapes up and becomes the silhouette of a human.

The Golem appears once again.

“Now that it taken form, it be movin’ as ordered. Now, get on.”

“Eh? We are riding it?” (Haine)

The Oba-san has already climbed on top of the arm of the Golem and has reached to its shoulder.

For an elder person, she is quite the dextrous one.

“I wrote a request ta give us a ride till my house. Ya’ll be headin’ to the city as well, right? If ya walk normally, ya’ll be taking all day.”

It is true. I was planning on reaching Istar Blaze by today, but because I was talking with the Oba-san, quite a lot of time ended up passing.

At this rate, the sun would sink quite a few ways before I reach the city and will be completely dark.

“ ... ”

I decided on taking up the offer.

For an outsider, the movements of the Golem look sluggish, but because of its big frame, its steps are also wide, and allowed it to reach the objective at a far higher speed than that of the feet of a human.

Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze.

The big tree that was overwhelming even when seeing it from a real long distance, was even more overwhelming when seeing it up close.

So this is Grandma Wood.

“Even when I look up, I can’t see its top.” (Haine)

Moreover, the thickness of the trunk would probably be spacious enough to place the Light Grand Church of Apollon City on it.

And if we were to take into account the roots that spread from it, it would probably take up about 1/10 of the whole Ishtar Blaze.

But aside from that, there’s nothing strange about the tree itself. At least at a glance, that is.

This is one of the sources for the calamity called monsters; one of the four Mother Monsters. This is hard to believe.

“How’s it? Tree-sama is incredible, don’t ya think?”

The Oba-san once again returns the Golem into rubble, and places the block that remains into her bosom.

“This be the pride of us, ya know. No matter where ya search in the whole world, there be no tree as big as ‘Great Pillar-sama’.”

“Great Pillar-sama?” (Haine)

“Everyone in the city calls it that way. A great tree-sama that brings forth blessings ta humans.”

I once again felt a gaze, so I look around. There’s a lot more Golems walking around the city of Ishtar Blaze compared to the time in the agricultural land. They are carrying luggage, carrying people, repairing houses; they are doing all this gallantly.

In other words, this place really is a place where...

“...Humans and monsters are coexisting?” (Haine)

“All of this be thanks ta Great Pillar-sama.”

Oba-san says this with slight pride.

“Traveller, can ya see it from here? There be people clinging onto Great Pillar-sama, right?”

When I strain my eyes to see where Oba-san is pointing at, I certainly did see it. At the surface of the thick and big tree, there’s some sort of human-looking things clinging onto it.

Rock climbing? No, it is a tree so...wood climbing?

At any rate, there’s people that are at an altitude that makes you question just how did they climb so far up...and just what in the hell are they doing?

“They be gettin’ this.”

The Oba-san says as she points at the brick.

“Eh? Then...!” (Haine)

“This Life Block comes from Great Pillar-sama. It protrudes from the surface of the tree ya see, and, at the end, it falls. But it be dangerous if it were left there till it falls and hits the head of someone, right? That’s why people of the church retrieve ones that are about ta fall.”

And with the testimony of the Oba-san, I was convinced of one thing; the Golems are without doubt earth monsters. The Life Blocks that serve as the core of this Golems, and the big tree that creates these Life Blocks.

That big tree is a ‘monster that gives birth to monsters’; it means that there’s no doubt it is a Mother Monster.

“...Hm? Please wait.” (Haine)

A part of it bothered me and I ask.

I point at the people that are still doing work at the surface of the tree.

“You said that the people picking the Life Blocks there are members of the Earth Church, right? Then does that mean that tree is under the management of the Earth Church?” (Haine)

“Yeah, that be right.”

At that moment, I once again felt a gaze.

Since the time I got closer to Ishtar Blaze, I have been feeling the gaze of an

unknown someone.

“If ya want ta, I can bring ya ta the Grand Crimson Palace.”

“Eh?”

Grand Crimson Palace? Is she referring to the Earth Church’s headquarters?

“It is rare for a traveller ta come all the way here after all. The people of the Church also want ta hear the stories of the outside, so they be telling us that whenever we meet with an outsider, we bring them ta their place. It seems like they be providing lodgin’ and food, so it is not a bad deal for ya either, ya know.”

That’s true.

In order to learn what’s happening in this city, it is crucial that I get in contact with the Earth Church.

“Well then, I will take you up on that offer. Sorry to have you take so much care of me.” (Haine)

“It’s fine. I have a grandchild, ya see. Right now they be living far away, but when I treat a stranger with kindness, I feel like that person will also treat my grandchild with kindness as well.”

...Ah, please stop that.

It reminds me of my mother and father in my village, and it brings me to tears.

Chapter 95: Sage

“Traveller, great to see you here.”

Having arrived at the Earth Church’s headquarters, the Grand Crimson Palace, I was guided by a member of the church to the inside of it.

There, the person waiting for me was a man of around 50 years old.

From what I heard, this man is the Founder of the Earth Church.

I couldn’t hold back my agitation from being so easily allowed to meet such an important person.

“Don’t worry, even if I am the Founder, I don’t have much to do in such a countryside as a leader. I always welcome guests that can alleviate my boredom.”

He has a slender face and looks like he is skinny, but his limbs have proper tough muscles, and the more I see it, the more I could tell that he is muscular.

How to say, should I call it an ideal musculature? If you were to train arbitrarily, you wouldn’t be able to get these kind of muscles. It is a figure that can only be obtained by people that continue working everyday and strengthens your body in kind.

His tanned skin also tells me about what kind of lifestyle this person leads.

“A countryside church? No way. The Earth Church is one of the five Great Churches that lead this world, isn’t it. Also, in the way here, I saw the big farm that extended further than the eye can see. Such a big agricultural land, no other churches possess something like that.” (Haine)

“All of it is the blessing of the Mother Earth Goddess-sama.”

I offered some lip service as a greeting of sorts, but the Earth Founder took it modestly.

Even so, calling the big farm that spreads at the surroundings of Ishtar Blaze as the biggest one of all might not be too far from the truth. I was indeed overwhelmed by its magnificence after all.

“Mother Earth Mantle-sama is the Goddess of good harvest. The crops that sprout from the earth and bear fruit, everything is thanks to Mantle-sama. And if us, who worship Mantle-sama, are to waste the blessing of the earth, that in itself would be a blasphemy.”

“That’s splendid!” (Haine)

I feel like I have met the first Founder that’s acting like an actual Founder.

With a cool gesture, the said Founder takes a tobacco from a tobacco box that was at his side, and lights it up.

Every movement he did felt like that of a millionaire.

“But, in this Ishtar Blaze, there’s a lot of things different compared to that of the other church headquarters. Specially that...” (Haine)

“The Golems? It is true that the outsiders that come here for the first time all get surprised by it.”

So it really was the case.

The Founder puffed out smoke of the tobacco from his mouth.

“For us, that’s something pretty natural. Since before we were born, Great Pillar-sama was there, and we grew alongside those Golems that Great Pillar-sama gave birth to. The Golems are our friends, and they are also our benefactors that help us in our daily life.”

“Uhm...this may sound rude but...I still find it hard to accept.” (Haine)

Because monsters are the enemies of humans by nature.

“I understand the confusion from the outside. When I was young and awakened my need to learn more in order to become an appropriate Earth Founder, I travelled to other countries to obtain experiences. By doing that, I learned this for the first time; about how abnormal our relationship with the Golems is.”

“Then...”

“Yes, I have seen it. In the other water, fire, wind, and light churches, they fight against these things called monsters, and suffer. Our Earth Church also

uses divine power, and because of it, we can tell with our trained senses...that monsters are the same thing as Golems.”

It is more accurate to say that Golems are a type of monsters.

“Of course, monsters also appear in the surroundings of Ishtar Blaze. Fire, water, and wind element monsters, that is. Our Earth Church also sees them as a threat and doesn’t neglect on preparations. Our military force, the Scorched Earth Annihilation corps, and the assigned earth hero are doing their best.”

“Ah, so there really is an earth hero.” (Haine)

Well, obviously.

“She is currently in a mission so she is away from the Grand Crimson Palace, but if you are going to be staying long as a guest, you can meet her once she returns, and I would like it if you were to tell her stories of the outside. She is also a person that carries the church on her back. I want her to widen her view as much as possible.”

The conversation deviated a bit.

The Founder plays around with the tobacco inside his hand for a bit, and then, returns the conversation back to the original topic.

“And in the fights against the evil monsters, the Golems also work as strong allies.”

“Must be. With that big frame and power, it would be able to deal with normal monsters plenty enough.” (Haine)

That means the Golems are helping out the humans in many aspects.

I wouldn’t have been able to imagine it before coming here. To think it would be possible to create such a harmonious world by having humans and monsters cooperate...

I now understand why Yorishiro warned me not to bring any ethereal devices as best as I can.

And in reality, I have seen almost no ethereal device since entering this city.

Because there’s no need for it.

The plowing of the big agricultural land, building houses, repairing them, and moving around, even the fighting that has ethereal strictly forbidden, Golems are able to participate in it.

If I were to untactfully bring ethereal devices here, the people here would instantly notice that I am an outsider and I would stand out in a bad way.

“Guest-san, as the Earth Founder, and also as one of the humans living in Ishtar Blaze, I have thought of it for a long time; what are Golems for us? There’s a saying that states monsters are the punishment of the Gods towards humans for forgetting their respect. If that’s really the case...”

The Golems who help out humans even though they are the same monsters are...

“...Might be the blessing of Mother Earth Mantle-sama for the humans that venerate her.”

That’s indeed a way that can be taken.

Even when they are the same monsters, compared to the other elements, only the earth monsters are acting differently towards the humans.

And among the five Churches, this place was able to develop in a way that is different from the others, but at the same time, in a way that doesn’t fall behind the others.

Proof of that is without doubt the big farm.

“...Oya, no good no good. Now that I notice, we have been talking about myself all this time.”

As if relieving his throat, the Earth Founder smokes his tobacco.

“Even though I had you come all the way here, it was rude to have you hear about stories of this old man all this time. Now, I want you to tell this country bumpkin about your stories. Now that I think about it, I haven’t heard you name yet. Really, it is embarrassing how bad of a reception I’m providing.”

“No, it is true that I was late to introducing myself. I am sorry about that. My name’s Kuromiya Haine.” (Haine)

Karan

A dull sound reverberated in the Grand Crimson Palace's floor.

The Earth Founder had dropped the tobacco he had in his hand.

“?!”

It feels like the expression of the Founder changed.

The narrowed eyes of the good natured old man were now wide open and staring right at me.

“...Uhm, is there something wrong?” (Haine)

“N-No no no no! It is nothing, it is nothing! I probably just smoked a bit too much and the strength in my hand went away!”

Saying this, the Founder hurriedly picks up his tobacco, and once again drops it by mistake.

This suspicious behaviour was indeed weird, but I can't just try to inquire about something that's clearly a landmine.

As long as the other party doesn't state the reason of it, I will just have to feign as if I didn't notice. After some harmless conversation, the talk with the Earth Founder ended.

Chapter 96: The guiding of the *Kodama*

<A spirit in Japanese folklore that inhabits trees>

And then, night came.

I, who was provided lodging at the Earth Church for one night, was sleeping in the guest room of the Grand Crimson Palace.

In the past, I have stayed in the guest room of the trading and sightseeing city Hydra Ville, and this one was simpler than that one, but that made it easier to relax and sleep in.

But I can't sleep yet.

I still have something I have to do.

I first wait for a good amount of time feigning as if I'm sleeping and wait for the surroundings to grow quiet.

"...I think it is already good enough." (Haine)

The presence that was peeking from the neighboring room is gone.

It is probably the lookout of the church. Maybe it has to do with the Founder clearly having a turn in his attitude when we were in the middle of our conversation?

But since they soon stopped their surveillance once they thought I had fallen asleep might mean that they don't think I am such a dangerous being.

Do I hold some sort of crucial importance to them?

I am bothered by it, but right now I have something I want to clear out first.

I jump out from the window of the guest room and...

"[Dark Matter, Set]" (Haine)

I use the repulsive force of the dark matter and fly.

Repeating this again, and again, and again, and again.

The place I am aiming for is...the big tree that represents this Ishtar Blaze, also

called 'Great Pillar-sama', and I go up, until I reach its top.

Up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up, up...

"....."

Am I still not there?

I was underestimating 'Great Pillar-sama'...

I understood that it was an incredibly tall tree even when looking from far away, but I had not understood it at all in terms of feel.

After a time that was plenty enough to count to 1,000 with time to spare, I finally reached the leaves that can be considered the summit.

But well, this is a tree not a mountain, so even if I say summit, there's only leaves everywhere I see though.

It is not reliable as footing, so I was using dark matter to hover in place, and so, I search the surroundings carefully.

What am I searching for?

I have been feeling it for a long time now. A gaze that has been peeking at me without rest. Even in the time when I was having a conversation with the Founder at the Earth Church's headquarters, in the time I entered Ishtar Blaze, in the time when I caused a commotion with the Oba-san and the Golem at the farm; in all those times, I felt a gaze.

And when I confirmed the figure of this big tree at the far away mountains, I felt this gaze as if examining me from afar.

This big tree is being called 'Great Pillar-sama' by the people. The reality of it is that this is an Earth Mother Monster, Grandma Wood.

Of course, its roots should be different to other trees.

The unbelievable size goes without saying. There's also the point that it can create this bricks called Life Blocks that possess life, but...

There should be other things as well.

"You can hear me right?! Come out!!" (Haine)

I shout at the peak of the big tree.

I took that much time to reach here from the ground, so even if I shout out my lungs, the people down wouldn't be able to hear me, that's why, there's no need to hold back.

"I noticed it, you know! You were watching me, right?! I felt a gaze the moment this tree came into my field of view!!" (Haine)

That's right, this thing that has nothing different aside from its big size, is in truth not a tree.

It is a monster in the shape of a tree.

Just like the trees growing in this world, it can't speak.

The most it can do would be to observe the person that has come to its own territory with the objective of destroying it.

"Isn't that right?! Am I mistaken?!" (Haine)

And then, a change occurred.

In this footing that has been a single blanket of green...a different color appeared.

It was like the color of wisteria, a light pink color. At any rate, it is a vivid color, and yet, a faint and fleeting color as well.

That's the color it had...that flower bud.

"Flower...bud?!" (Haine)

Even if I say flower, it is coming from a giant tree. The flower that is growing from it is also pretty big itself, and its bud already surpassed my height.

"Or more like, this tree can grow flowers?!" (Haine)

And then, the tip of the bud slowly opened and spread into several separated petals. And from inside it, what came out was not a stamen or a pistil, it was a woman.

She is not a human; I could tell that with a glance.

She has a figure that is quite similar to that of a human woman, but in the first

place, normal humans don't come out from flowers. Also, at the surface of her body, there's things like wisterias and peaches that have a vivid yet fleeting color.

And, I myself understood something the moment I saw her.

“...Are you...Mantle?” (Haine)

Mother Earth Mantle.

One of the five Gods of Creation, and the Goddess that governs over earth.

As the incarnation of the Dark God Entropy, I can tell.

I don't know for what reason she appeared in the surface world with a body, I was so dumbfounded I couldn't say anything.

And then, after a while of silence...

“.....I’m sorry.”

“Eh?”

She suddenly apologized.

[illegible]

The big woman shouted a storm of apologies while crying?!

“Uhah! What’s with this?!” (Haine)

“Please forgive meee!! I will do anything!” (Mantle)

Is what she says as she clings onto me.

Moreover, this Mantle...even though she is in the form of a human, she is so big I can't think of her as a human.

She came out from a crazy big flower that came out from a crazy big tree, so

the woman that came out from it was also crazy big.

She easily surpasses my height.

Try to have someone like that cling onto you. It is like having a big dog pressing you...but that wouldn't be enough to describe this. It is like a giant beast, like a lion or a tiger jumping at you.

Against a beast that has a certain amount of strength, it is life-threatening to try and play around with it.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm soooooooooorryyyy!!!" (Mantle)

"As I have been saying, just calm down already!!!" (Haine)

With all the confusion, the release of dark matter was cut off. And because of it, the repulsive force it was creating was also gone and...

"Gyaaa!!"

"Hyaaa!"

Mantle and I both fell and entered the overgrown leaves of the big tree.

Chapter 97: Holy Flower

“I thought I was going to die there!”

Having lost the ability to float, I fell down inside the foliage and, luckily, I got caught in a branch and it ended with nothing major happening. I say branch, but we are talking about Grandma Wood here, so it is big enough to be called ground in itself. It is more than enough to consider it a footing.

And if I were to fall without stopping, I would have definitely died.

But, the moment I fell onto the thick branch, Mantle who came falling down after had crashed onto me with those giant breasts of hers and I felt as if I was going to die crushed by them.

I felt like I was going to die twice over.

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorryyy!” (Mantle)

The giant woman prostrates on top of the branch.

A big woman that you can easily state that there’s no adult man that can grow as big as her.

From the women I know of, the one who was the tallest was the fire hero, Mirack, but even when comparing her to Mirack, from what I can measure with my eyes, she is at least 1.5 times bigger than her.

Of course, she is taller than me as well. If we were to line up, my face would be right around her breasts.

But, since the time I encountered her, the only thing she has been doing is chanting those same words and prostrating herself, so I don’t really know for sure if my measurements are actually correct though.

“I’m sorry, please forgive me. I will do anything~!!” (Mantle)

And this giant woman is still apologizing.

What is she even apologizing this much for?

“...Uhm, first of all, you are really Mother Earth Mantle, right?” (Haine)

“Yes! And you are the Dark God Entropy-san, right?!” (Mantle)

Well, yeah.

If she can tell my identity it is proof that she is also a God.

“That body...did you incarnate as a monster just like Nova and Coacervate?”
(Haine)

Why do the four Base Element Gods like to incarnate into monsters that much?

“...No, it is not. This is just a temporary body.” (Mantle)

“Hm?”

“In order to communicate in the surface world, it would be easier to have the ability to sense and speak. It is one of the abilities I have as a Mother Earth God. I can connect my senses directly into any plant I want. I call this ‘Fairy’.”
(Mantle)

Saying this, Mantle looks down at her own body that is shining faintly and shows slight embarrassment.

“It is normally in the size of the palm of a hand, but it seems it is proportionate to the plant that was made as the source. I didn’t expect the ‘Fairy’ created from Grandma Wood to be so big...” (Mantle)

A power I didn’t know of.

The powers of the Mother Earth Mantle are not only of the earth, but it also includes the vegetation that grows from it as a whole.

In that sense, it can be said that her powers are a lot more wide in range compared to me -the Dark God.

“It is not that convenient of a thing though. This body has no ability to fight after all. The most I can do is really only conversing.....ah, there’s also one other thing it can do! Want to fondle my breasts?” (Mantle)

“I won’t!” (Haine)

I have plenty enough of that with Karen-san and Yorishiro.

When I straight out rejected it, the expression of the excited Mantle suddenly

froze.

“As I thought, Entropy-san, you really are angry!” (Mantle)

“Eh?”

And then, she began crying.

“Uuuuuh~~!! I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry~~!! You can fondle other things aside from my breasts, so please forgive me~!!” (Mantle)

And she once again begins with the storm of apologies.

Moreover, she is not only apologizing, she is also clinging onto me, so with that big body of hers pressing onto me, I might get killed.

“Eey, give it a break already! In the first place, what have you been apologizing all this time for?!” (Haine)

“But Entropy-san, you are angry, aren’t you? About what happened 1,600 years ago...” (Mantle)

Aah.

“That’s why, since the time you incarnated, you fought Nova-san and Coacervate-san, and turned them into beaten pulp. And now, you are looking to serve vengeance upon me too, aren’t you? We don’t know where Quasar-san is after all...” (Mantle)

I see. So she is talking about the Battle of Gods that occurred 1,600 years ago...

I was sealed for 1,600 years after being defeated by the five Gods of Creation. Now that the seal has been undone and I am free, she thinks I am now going around beating them up to clear away my grudge...that’s indeed a plausible conclusion.

Also, beaten pulp?

“I am reaaaally sorry! I didn’t really turn into your enemy because I hated Entropy-san or anything like that! I didn’t want to be left out of the group~!” (Mantle)

Saying this, the giant ‘fairy’ prostrates herself once again.

It is true that this woman has been like this since the long past.

How to say it, it is like she is not independent at all, or more like, she doesn't hold her own opinion. She ends up being pressured by her surroundings.

Her wish is probably 'I don't want to be the enemy of anyone'.

And because of it, when there's a confrontation, she wants to be good for both sides and ends up unable to say anything herself.

Even so, in the fight 1,600 years ago, the fighting force was so inclined to one side that she judged it was impossible to stay neutral and decided on joining the other Gods.

In other words, a fence-sitter.

"...But in these 1,600 years, the situation has changed greatly. You four Base Element Gods have changed due to being bathed way too much in the prayer energy and are unable to show your former strength. And the biggest factor is that the Light Goddess Inflation is no longer on your side." (Haine)

"Hyu!"

"Frankly speaking, in the battle 1,600 years ago, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that it was a 1 vs 1 between Inflation and I. I possess an absolute advantage against you four Base Elements, but I am completely powerless against the light element. Having Inflation as your ally is akin to me being checkmated already." (Haine)

But because of the rise and fall of the Dark Underworld Country that occurred after the battle of Gods, Inflation ended up changing into a Goddess that would definitely kill the four Base Elements.

Even if a battle of Gods were to occur again, she won't be siding with the four Base Elements again.

"Now that I think about it, I heard you also supported the destruction of the Underworld Country." (Haine)

Right at the time when the history of mankind had begun, the Light Goddess Inflation had incarnated into the human called Izanami, and what was created was the oldest nation of all, the Underworld Country.

The first time humans had shown development in culture and progress had hurt the superiority complex of the Gods and because of it, the purging begun.

With the disasters that were brought by the Gods and the invaders from outside that were influenced by them, the Underworld Country fell.

The ones who perpetrated this were the Earth, Water, Fire, and Wind Base Element Gods. In that group, Mother Earth Mantle is included.

“S-Sowwy~~!” (Mantle)

Because she cried too much, her voice was incredibly nasal.

“I had no choice~! The three of them came at me telling me to cooperate~~! If Inflation had been there, I would have been able to oppose them a bit, but she had been missing for a long time, moreover, when we found her, we discovered that she was actually the incarnation of the queen of the Underworld Country~~!!” (Mantle)

She really is a girl that gets easily pressured by others.

According to Yorishiro who knows about the events of that time, Mantle was conservative in the destruction of the Underworld Country and had cooperated with the other Gods unwillingly.

The desertification that occurred was a slow advancing one compared to the disasters from the other Gods, moreover, it ended up being helpful in the seal that Inflation did.

“I’m sorry, I’m really sorry. You can fondle anywhere you want~~!!” (Mantle)

The Mother Earth God rubs her forehead on the ground, or more like, the branch that’s serving as our footing.

This might be considered her personality but, that attitude of hers that makes you question ‘Dignity of a God? What’s that?’ is on the contrary very refreshing.

“Hah...it is fine already.” (Haine)

I said this while losing strength.

Chapter 98: Divine Virtue of Mother Earth

“I am not really concerned with what happened 1,600 years ago. I told that to the other guys as well though.” (Haine)

Like hell I will remember all the resentments I had in the past.

“B-But Nova-san and Coacervate-san...” (Mantle)

“Those guys pissed me off at present, so I beat them up. The problem was in the present. Or could it be that you are currently doing something in the present progressive sense that would piss me off?” (Haine)

“Ah eh...oboboboboboboo~~!!” (Mantle)

She got extremely suspicious.

Her shaken state is not simply at the level of easy to read.

“Ah, is it that? The issue about monsters?” (Haine)

“T-T-That was something I was told by the others to do, I had no choice! I couldn’t do anything about it! I was also lacking in prayer energy and was drying up, so there was the need of a method to break through... And if I were to oppose by myself, I might get estranged. And Inflation-sama withdrew by herself without telling me anything~~!!” (Mantle)

“That’s why you agreed with Coacervate and created monsters?” (Haine)

“Yes...but...” (Mantle)

Mantle does a cute gesture of placing both of her right and left index fingers together and moving them slightly up and down.

“I actually...hate disputes. I honestly didn’t want to fight in the battle 1,600 years ago. I didn’t want to destroy the Underworld Country either. But, if I opposed it, it might have turned Nova-san, Coacervate-san, and Quasar-san against me, so...I did it against my will...” (Mantle)

“So going against me was okay?” (Haine)

“Because you know, Entropy-san is kind so...you might forgive me if we were

to talk it out...” (Mantle)

Uwa...

Don't peek at me with that upward glance of yours. If you do an upward glance with such a big body, you will naturally end up bend down incredibly low.

“That's why I decided on opposing this time. I did agree on creating monsters, but as I thought, I don't want any strife.” (Mantle)

That statement of Mantle made a number of pieces fall in place.

“Hence, the Golems huh.” (Haine)

Even when they are monsters, they don't attack humans.

Not only that, they follow the orders of humans, help out on the work of humans, and are cohabiting with humans.

That reason was directly related to the main principle of the Mother Earth God.

“No, wait. Let's arrange the information.” (Haine)

I only came all the way to the giant tree to investigate since I thought there was something strange about it, but the one that came out was the one who held all the answers, Mother Earth Mantle.

Moreover, she keeps talking on and on about information that sounds truthful.

If I stay spaced-out, I feel like I might get buried in this avalanche of info.

“Even I was troubled, you know?” (Mantle)

Like I said, don't go talking so much when I haven't asked anything yet.

Moreover, I feel like she is just complaining here.

“Inflation-sama told me about the prayer energy, and when I tried a taste of it, it was sweet, it was delicious, it was wonderful. I soon ended up captivated by it. I wanted more of it, so I made the Earth Church. A lot of people gathered at the church, a lot of prayers were gathered; it was true bliss. I drunk prayers everyday as if drowning in it. But...before I noticed, the prayers had lessened

and..." (Mantle)

The voice of Mantle was shrivelling up.

"When I heard from Inflation-sama that: 'Humans don't need Gods anymore', everything went pitch-black. And at the same time, I understood that Inflation-sama had not forgiven us at all for the destruction of the Underworld Country. Nova-san just yelled around, Coacervate-san was grumpy, and when I thought Quasar-san had returned after several centuries, he once again disappeared..." (Mantle)

Gods that were pushed into despair huh.

But, if we think about the feelings of Inflation, you can call it an eye for an eye. The grudge she has on them for destroying the Underworld Country she lovingly raised must have been something that seeped all the way down to her bone marrow.

She even entrapped Mantle, who was reluctant about participating and had helped her in sealing the Underworld Country, without showing any mercy or pity.

"We had to do something. Right now, we can't maintain ourselves properly without prayers after all." (Mantle)

Hence, the monsters.

The villains that were made to create the necessity of a God in humans.

By having those monsters and the warriors of the Church fight, they get the humans to feel grateful for the Gods, and they offer prayers to them. But there was one God that didn't do that; the one right here.

"...I hate fights after all..." (Mantle)

Mantle says this dejected.

"That's why you created monsters and did the opposite huh. Rather than having monsters attack humans, you earned their faith by helping them. It is clearly transmitted to the humans that the Golems and Grandma Wood were dispatched by a God after all." (Haine)

"That's right! This went unexpectedly well, you know!" (Mantle)

Not only did she stop crying, she actually made a complete 180° and approaches me.

Drastic mood-swings is also one of the traits this God has.

“‘Golems are the blessing of God’, ‘Thank you for your divine protection’, they say. A lot of people gave me their gratitude! I was deeply moved! Thanks to that, a lot of prayers gathered. And most importantly...it makes me happy to receive the gratitude of someone. It reaaaally makes it worth doing! So this is how it is to work as a God!!” (Mantle)

“I understand! I understand, so calm down!!” (Haine)

What should I do? I am beginning to think that Mantle is saying something very reasonable.

In order to maintain her own existence, she requires the prayers of humans, and for that sake, she provided the divine protection in the form of Golems to humans.

The humans understand that this is the blessing of a God, and in order to return the favor, they offer prayers of gratitude.

A give-and-take relationship is properly formed, moreover, Mantle is genuinely joyful that she receives the gratitude of humans.

Is there a more healthy relationship between humans and God?

This crooked existences called monsters...to think that depending on the way they are implemented, they can actually provide good influence.

The ethereal, which is the main cause of the prayers decreasing, has not permeated that deeply in Ishtar Blaze because it is filled with the working force that are Golems.

...Eh?

I feel like there's no gaps?

Chapter 99: Decision

“And so, uhm...”

I was on top of the big tree, continuing the conversation with Mother Earth Mantle.

“Didn’t the other Gods say anything about your way of doing things? Like Nova and Coacervate maybe?” (Haine)

“They did. They said things like ‘your method is dirty’ and ‘don’t you have pride as a God?’, Being told those things really hurt me; it made me want to cry. But surprisingly, they didn’t go further than that. And there was no forcing from their part either.” (Mantle)

Within the five Gods of Creation, the ones against the monster plan wasn’t only Mantle; the Light Goddess Inflation rejected the very idea of creating them.

If they were to criticise Mantle heavily, it would naturally force them to direct this criticism at Inflation as well, and if that were to happen, they wouldn’t be able to control the situation.

The only one from the five Gods that didn’t enter in the machinations of the four Base Elements, the Light Goddess Inflation. The two poles are by nature on a different level from the four Base Elements, so in order to defeat Inflation, they would have to gang up on her with all four Base Elements.

If going against Inflation meant they would have to go against Mantle as well, the ones going against Inflation wouldn’t have a one in a million chance to defeat her.

If Mantle calculated all this and showed the first signs of opposition based on this, it would mean that, despite her looks, she is a schemer, but...

“Fuh...”

There’s no way she thought that far -definitely.

“ ”

After thinking for a bit, I decided on saying it.

“Hey, Mantle.” (Haine)

“Fueh?”

“The reason I came here was to...destroy Grandma Wood.” (Haine)

“Fuuueeeeeeeeeee?!” (Mantle) <she is actually saying ‘Fuh?’ but if I prolong it, it will sound as ‘FUUUUUUUUU—!’, and that’s not cute at all in english context, so I went for the ‘Fue’ that fits her character>

As expected, Mantle reacted with a scream.

“The influence of Gods shouldn’t be left in this world anymore. That’s why I decided on destroying the very materialization of the Gods’ influence, the monsters. For that sake, what has to be done is to defeat all of the Mother Monsters that serve as the origin of them all.” (Haine)

“Fue...”

For a while now, Mantle has only been saying ‘fue’.

“And so, I decided on dealing with the Earth Mother Monster -Grandma Wood-which I knew of its exact whereabouts. That’s why I am currently here.” (Haine)

“T-Then, you will be...” (Mantle)

I will be hitting Grandma Wood with the dark matter.

In reality, most attacks would be rended useless against this giant tree of humongous mass, but if it’s my dark matter, it should be able to manage somehow.

“Uhm...what about mercy? Is there no room for mercy?” (Mantle)

A God is begging for mercy from a God.

“Well...” (Haine)

And I was troubled by how to respond.

I already understand.

I decided on defeating the Mother Monsters in order to remove this existence

that only harms humans...but once I arrived at the place and took a look at the Mother Monster, I ended up thinking 'taking this away will actually harm the humans'.

I don't know about the other three, but at the very least, that's how I think with this Grandma Wood.

A giant tree that brought a symbiosis between humans and monsters and is called with respect by the people as 'Great Pillar-sama'.

Just how much would it hurt the people of Ishtar Blaze if this were to be lost, in a physical and mental sense.

Is what I am doing...truly the correct thing?

".....I give up." (Haine)

After a long silence, I said this.

"Eh? Eeeh?!"

"I will put it on hold! I will leave Grandma Wood for later and prioritize the destruction of the other Mother Monsters!" (Haine)

I had no other option than to say this.

What I am doing is all for the sake of humans. If it ends up hurting the humans instead, wouldn't I be having my priorities backwards?

"Eh? Seriously? Like, seriously?" (Mantle)

It looks like Mantle was still dubious about my decision.

"Seriously. I -Kuromiya Haine-don't go back on my words." (Haine)

"Really, really, really? Yay!! I am so happy!! Thanks, Entropy-san, I like you so much! Want to fondle my breasts? You will, right?! This is the least I can do! Fondle them!!" (Mantle)

"As I said already, I won't! Why are you so persistent about it?!" (Haine)

The happiness of Mantle was overwhelming. She must have been quite happy.

"No, but you see, Mantle, my impression of you has been shaken." (Haine)

“Eh?”

“I thought you were a Goddess that couldn’t state your own opinion and would get oppressed by the atmosphere at the time. But this Ishtar Blaze that you have made is an Utopia of cohabitation between humans and monsters that I simply can’t find fault in.” (Haine)

I looked down from the branch of Grandma Wood I am currently standing on.

I was blocked by the leaves and it can’t be called a clear view, but I could see the big city and farm.

“This is how humans and Gods should have lived like. Gods would help humans, and humans will be grateful to the Gods; both will seek for each other. This is probably...the world I wanted to make in the Genesis Era.” (Haine)

“Eh? Uhm...” (Mantle)

The whole ‘fairy’ body of Mantle is dyed in a light vivid pink color, and that color suddenly turned into a deep vivid one. Like a flower blooming.

“What?! What’s wrong all of a sudden!” (Haine)

“That’s...that’s not true. Someone like me...someone like me is just...”
(Mantle)

Her mouth may be denying it, but the expression of Mantle was unable to suppress the smile in her face. She is probably incredibly happy.

Happy that she has been praised.

“Someone like me is always being called clumsy and unreliable within the five Gods, and I am always made a fool of... Please don’t flatter me, Entropy-san. I am...an idiot, so I will end up taking those words seriously! Want to fondle my boobs?” (Mantle)

“I just stated the truth. You are a God that’s sincere and is able to do what has to be done. It may look stupid from the perspective of an underhanded God like Coacervate, but that crooked view of his is a fault of that low-life God anyways. Don’t mind what a guy like that says.” (Haine)

“! Coacervate-san...” (Mantle)

Hearing that name, the face of Mantle that was intoxicated by happiness was immediately clouded.

“Hm? What’s wrong?” (Haine)

“No! It is nothing! But, this is the first time I was told I am sincere and straightforward. Fufufufu~~” (Mantle)

But she soon returned to her intoxicated state.

Getting so happy about it...she most likely doesn’t get praised much.

“Have more confidence. You are the mother of all the ones that stand on land, the Mother Earth God. What you have achieved in this land is worthy of praise; this Dark God Entropy admits to it. From now on, please continue pouring your affection in this land as the Mother Earth God without changing.” (Haine)

“Yes! I like you very much, Entropy-san. Being acknowledge this much by someone...this is my first time since the Genesis Era! It made me feel like I have to do something incredible!” (Mantle)

The motivation of Mantle had increased to the point that it wouldn’t be able to get any higher than this.

On the other hand, I who decided on ‘defeating the Mother Monsters’ had stumbled right at the very beginning, and I felt pretty shriveled up from that.

Now then, what should I do from now on...

Maybe I should return to Apollon City and revise my plan?

Chapter 100: Heroes assemble

In the time Haine-san was having an exciting journey at an unknown land...

I -the light hero, Kourin Karen-was in a bad mood.

This is the first time...that I wasn't able to accompany Haine-san in a journey of his.

In the Trishia Forest, Radona Mountainous District, Hydra Ville, and the 'Nameless Desert' where we arrived at the Underworld Country; no matter where it was, we would always go together, and yet, this time, I am holding the fort on my own.

I don't approve of this.

More so after hearing the objective of his journey.

This time, Haine-san went to search and defeat these things called Mother Monsters.

When I asked what they were, I was told that they were monsters that give birth to monsters. It seems all monsters come from them.

In other words, if all Mother Monsters are defeated, new monsters will not be appearing anymore.

It means monsters will be eradicated from this world.

If that's true, there's nothing as amazing as that. I want to help in that too.

Dealing with monster problems is exactly the job of us heroes.

And yet, Haine-san didn't bring me with him.

How mortifying. I don't agree to this.

We can save the whole world; I can be of help to Haine-san.

To think I wouldn't be able to do anything when I am aware of those chances...

“...So?”

In the Grand Church’s parlor room of the Light capital, Apollon City, a displeased voice reverberated.

Even though my bad mood won’t lose to it.

“Are you telling me we have been gathered here just to hear you complain?”

“To sum it up, yeah.” (Karen)

“Don’t joke around!!”

Two hands slammed the table hard. Because of the vibration it created, the tea I took the trouble of making almost spilled.

“You are noisy, idol woman.” (Mirack)

Mirack says at the opposite seat.

This girl, she is chewing on the slice of lemon that was accompanying the tea.

“Show etiquette in a tea party. Wasn’t your outward appearance your only good point?” (Mirack)

“Shat up, shemale! In a place like this, I would forget my manners and etiquette!” (Celestis)

The water hero, Celestis-san, hits the table going *ban ban ban!*.

How surprising. I thought she was a more rational person.

“...It was unexpected. I thought the light hero was a girl with a bit more common sense than this.” (Celestis)

“Eh? Isn’t it fine? In the times when something crazy happens, anyone would want to call their friends over to talk about it.” (Karen)

“If you are going to call people, call the ones that are
close,

please! Don’t go gathering people that you need to call with an ethereal wireless phone and takes half a day to arrive with a flying machine!” (Celestis)

Today’s tea party members.

First, there's me, the light hero, Kourin Karen; next, there's the fire hero that is based at the neighboring Muspelheim, Katak Mirack-chan; and lastly, the water hero that is based even further than that at Hydra Ville, Celestis-san.

Those are the three here.

As heroes, we have similar worries and interests, so I thought that we would have many things in common to talk about, and tried calling them here.

Since the time we defeated the Great Sea Dragon in Hydra Ville, we have understood each other's hearts, so I thought it would be nice to open up at least once and have a talk.

And so, it leads to the present.

"...Uhm, Karen-chi, it is true that I have suspended my idol activities since the trouble with the Great Sea Dragon, so my schedule has opened up slightly, but we are already planning on resuming activities. The first live for my return has already been decided, and with my motivation rising, I was itching to do some rehearsals, you know?" (Celestis)

"Congratulations. I will send you flowers in the day of your live!" (Karen)

"As if some flowers will be sufficient! Calling me just to have a damn talk when I am super busy with rehearsals and meetings! If you yourself don't appear as a guest, the cost and return won't match!" (Celestis)

You are so energetic, Celestis-san.

If someone were not filled with this much energy, they most likely wouldn't be able to do something as taxing as being a hero and idol at the same time.

"Were you okay with being called here, Mirack-chan?" (Karen)

"Hah...what are you saying, Karen? Do you think I wouldn't move once called by you?" (Mirack)

Saying this, Mirack-chan sips her tea sonorously.

"No no, isn't that something you ask *before*

you call a person over?", is the retort of Celestis-san that I ignored.

"But, weren't you given strict orders by the Fire Church to not move from the

base?” (Karen)

Because she has been visiting Apollon City too much lately, the Fire Founder-sama and many others were angered by it.

She wasn't able to accompany us in the search of the Underworld Country due to this.

“Is it okay already? Was your restriction lifted?” (Karen)

“Don't worry, Karen. Who the hell do you think I am? You are talking to the one that's boasted as the strongest within the heroes, the fire hero, Katakami, you know. I have long been prepared to be scolded!” (Mirack)

“That's not okay at all!!” (Celestis)

Celestis-san makes an intense retort in my stead.

In this time when Haine-san is absent, she is quite the priceless treasure in this group.

“...Good grief. To think the fire hero and the light hero had such high quantities of crazy inside of them. This is way too surprising.” (Celestis)

“You as well, it is surprising that you have such a straight man side.” (Karen)

“It is just that you two have way too much to retort about! Ah geez! I have been shouting so much that my throat has dried! Give me another serving of tea! Serve me one that has honey syrup that's gentle to the throat!” (Celestis)

Yes yes, on my way.

But this very situation of having heroes gathered like this with no pressing business and simply drinking tea, wouldn't have been possible a few months ago.

Mirack-chan aimed to be the strongest and viewed the other heroes as her enemies, and Celestis-san was endeavouring in her idol activities so the other heroes were not even in her view.

“...So, that tough guy-kun, where is he?” (Celestis)

“Eh?”

The sudden question of Celestis-san made me stop my hands that were

pouring tea from the pot.

“The things that you would call us to complain about are limited, right? Things related to monsters and the church, and things that you wouldn’t want to leak to the general populace. Also, the cool guy that you have been together with all the time lately is nowhere to be seen today of all days. It is way too clear that it has something to do with this, you know.” (Celestis)

“Celestis-san, contrary to your looks, you are actually intelligent.” (Karen)

“Can I leave already?!” (Celestis)

No no, I won’t let you go.

I have been given the chance to talk, so I will have them hear everything I have to say.

From there on, my words flowed out fluently.

I will have Mirack-chan and Celestis-san hear about how Haine-san left me behind, without leaving a single detail.

Chapter 101: If

“Mother Monster?”

After spitting out all that was accumulated in me, Mirack-chan and Celestis-san both showed equally bewildered expressions.

As if saying, ‘Unbelievable’.

“Are you serious? If that story is actually true, that’s way too incredible!”
(Celestis)

“That’s only if this thing called Mother Monster actually exists, right? Wouldn’t it mean that if we just defeat those guys, monsters won’t be born again?!” (Mirack)

That’s right. It means that we would be able to completely eliminate the monsters that have been a harm to humans for close to a century.

And our Haine-san went out to defeat them. Leaving me behind, he went all on his own.

“Wah~, I did think he was an incredible dude, but this Haine-chi is more than I imagined. To think he would be able to catch the existence of such a thing.”
(Celestis)

“He has a part of him that no one can measure after all. I have never been able to predict what he will do next.” (Mirack)

That’s right, Haine-san is amazing.

As expected of the person I love. But that’s the very reason why...

“What’s the meaning of this! Why didn’t he let me help him?! I am a hero, you know. If it’s about doing something about the monsters, I should be the one moving to action!” (Karen)

“Simmer down, Karen-chi, simmer down~~!” (Celestis)

Celestis-san tries to calm me down as if I am a horse.

“Karen, what did Haine tell you that made you stay here?” (Mirack)

“That’s...’the duty of a hero is to protect the people from monsters. Properly staying in the capital to enforce this is important’, he said.” (Karen)

“Isn’t that a sound argument?” (Mirack)

I don’t want to hear that from Mirack-chan who comes to other cities with the resolve of getting scolded by the Founder-san and the others just to have fun.

I was the one who called her here though.

“What’s with this group of people that I can’t find enough words to retort to?!” (Celestis)

Celestis-san, who was filling up the straight man role in Haine-san’s absence plenty well, was shuddering.

“You girls, even if you can fly wherever you want with that flying machine of yours, aren’t you moving around way too much? I think heroes should be standing by, prepared to act for the sake of the church and the people. Haine-chi may have been late in noticing this, but he has now.” (Celestis)

“But if we defeat the Mother Monsters, there would be no need to do that anymore, right?” (Mirack)

The mission Haine-san left to accomplish had enough power to completely flip around the situation in this world.

“Uhm...you two...” (Karen)

At this moment, I decided on asking the question I have been holding until now.

Mother Monsters. The moment the existence of something like that was made clear, a question was born inside of me.

“If monsters disappear from this world, what would you do?” (Karen)

“Hm?” “Eh?”

Being thrown that question, Mirack-chan and Celestis-san looked as if they were caught off guard.

We are heroes.

The duty of heroes is to fight monsters. Fight monsters and protect the people; we continue doing this forever. There's no end to it.

If I had to mention an end in it, it would be when we run out of stamina or physical strength; till the moment we are unable to continue fighting.

In that way, several heroes in the past have taken over the standard, and have inherited the title of hero.

But that's only because there are monsters in this world.

Heroes exist in order to oppose the threat called monsters. Putting it in another way, once monsters are gone, the heroes won't be needed anymore.

Haine-san is a strong and incredible person. On top of that, he is kind, cool, intelligent, sincere, and once he says something, he will definitely accomplish it.

If it's him, he might be able to eradicate the monsters from this world.

But, when that happens, what will we do?

The great exploit Haine-san is trying to accomplish might take away our whole raison d'être.

"Hm~, well, when that happens, we heroes will be going to the trash bin."
(Celestis)

Looks like Celestis-san reached the same conclusion. Moreover, her expression was dry.

"I don't really mind." (Celestis)

"Eh?"

"Because you know, once I am out of the hero profession, I can just concentrate in being an idol. From the very beginning, I was not thinking about living a life of being only a hero." (Celestis)

The water hero is strong.

It is true that Celestis-san, who is wearing both pair of shoes for a hero and an idol, has that kind of choice.

"Well, it is fine for people like me who can fall onto something, but the people that can't...might be quite pitiful~." (Celestis)

“I also don’t mind, you know.” (Mirack)

“Eh?”

Celestis-san send a malicious gaze towards Mirack-chan, but it seems Mirack-chan also isn’t adhered to being a hero.

“Thinking about the original reason I aimed for when becoming a hero, there’s no need to be a hero for eternity, that’s all there’s to it. If monsters disappear from this world completely...it might be nice to aim at being the strongest among all humans. It could be more of a heated competition than fighting against those brainless monsters.” (Mirack)

“Uwa...battle junkie.” (Celestis)

“Also, if I am not tied down by the duty of a hero, I can hang around Karen’s place without restrain!” (Mirack)

“So in the end it falls to that!” (Celestis)

Celestis-san and Mirack-chan had a mindset that was so free it was surprising.

I see, there’s no real need to continue being a hero.

Before being a hero, I am a human, I am a girl. This goes for Celestis and Mirack as well.

If I were to stop being a hero, what kind of new life should I walk?

“...Haine-san’s wife.” (Karen)

“Eh?” “Eh?”

That’s right. Why didn’t I notice such a splendid life plan until now?

By the way, the number one reason for heroes retiring is marriage...in other words, a congratulatory retirement.

For some reason, there’s a weird law in this world stating that heroes have to be single, so once I marry Haine-san, I would have to stop being a hero.

In that case, in the time I retire as a hero, wouldn’t it be best if the root of all evils was eliminated?

Without leaving a single trace behind.

“Right. In the first place, the duty of us heroes is to protect the people from monsters. And the ultimate duty would be to eradicate monsters itself. Why should we hesitate after learning the way to do that?!” (Karen)

“Eh, before that, wait a bit, Karen. Did you say something about marrying? Eh?” (Mirack)

For some reason, Mirack-chan suddenly got restless.

“In that case, this is no time to be drinking tea! Defeating the Mother Monsters is the ultimate duty of us heroes! We can’t leave it all to Haine-san!” (Karen)

“No well, that’s good and all but, about the marrying thing... about the marrying thing!! Are you going to marry, Karen? With who?! I think you said Haine... There must be something wrong with my ears. Definitely!” (Mirack)

Haine-san, as I thought, I will be going as well.

I will help Haine-san, defeat the Mother Monsters, and bring about a world where the people all over the world won’t have to fear for their lives!

“Hey, listen to me! Listen to me, Karen! What’s this about marrying?! That’s not true, right?! No way that’s true!” (Mirack)

Chapter 102: Could it be...

“So, where did Haine-chi travel to?” (Celestis)

“Ah.”

The calm retort of Celestis-san deflates all of my inflated tension.

“.....I don’t know.” (Karen)

“Eh?”

“Before he left, I asked him a lot, but he didn’t tell me. He said that I would definitely follow him if he were to tell me!!” (Karen)

“And isn’t that completely true? As expected of Haine-chi, his intuition is Godlike.” (Celestis)

Please don’t say that as if it’s someone else’s business.

We got all enthusiastic and, in the end, we are unable to make the first step forward.

“But thinking about it like this, there’s something that bothers me.” (Celestis)

“Eh? What is it?” (Karen)

“What in the world is Haine-chi?” (Celestis)

I couldn’t understand the question of Celestis-san right away.

“I think Haine-san is Haine-san though?” (Karen)

“No, it is not the kind of ‘I think therefore I am’... You know, don’t you feel like that guy is way too excelling in a lot of meanings? I have not seen it myself, but he has a rare power called dark element, right?” (Celestis)

That’s right, Celestis-san has not had the chance to see it yet, but Haine-san is a person that doesn’t fall into any of the elements known in this world.

That power of his is overwhelming, and the dark element Haine-san creates managed to block a high-temperature flash, could beat up the giant fire cow, and even turned it calf-sized. It even easily defeated the shadow-san that the light element was unable to scratch at all.

It was not Haine-san himself, but when the Great Sea Dragon attacked Hydra Ville and had released a tsunami on the level that could destroy the whole city, the mysterious dark giant-san created a weir with dark matter and reduced the damage on the city to zero.

If we think of Haine-san as the only human recorded in history that can utilize dark matter, calling this power rare wouldn't be enough to describe how important it is.

"Haine-chi himself acted completely normal, so we also acted normal about it, but you know, in reality, isn't his very existence something big enough to turn around the very principle of the five churches? What was it again? That uhm... Dark God, Entrocko?" (Celestis)

"Dark God, Entropy-sama." (Karen)

What's with that weird sounding name?

"That's right. When I heard that from you girls, I was thinking 'what kind of ridiculous thing is this woman saying?', but...that Dark Giant that appeared in the fight with the Great Sea Dragon, isn't that proof of the existence of that God? Such a truth like there being six Gods of Creation rather than five, that's on the level of rewriting history, you know." (Celestis)

That's right. If Haine-san feels like it, he would be able to flip the world around to its very foundations.

No, in reality, he is trying to turn it around at this very moment. If Haine-san defeats the Mother Monsters, the world will change with Haine-san at its centre.

"Kuromiya Haine. Now that I think about it, he is one mysterious man. It feels as if he doesn't belong to any part of the world, and it feels...as if the world will be revolving around him." (Mirack)

Is what Mirack-chan says.

.....

The two of them are now friends. Friends that have overcome life or death situations together with me, and heroes that can share doubts and worries with

each other.

It is exactly because they are my friends that I decided on revealing the feeling that has been lurking inside of me for some time now.

“Uhm, this is just for argument’s sake. Just for argument’s sake...!” (Karen)

“Hm?” “Okay?”

Mirack-chan and Celestis-san probably noticed the low tone I had, they both stayed silent.

“What if Haine-san himself is the Dark God Entropy?!” (Karen)

“.....”

The two of them were suddenly at a loss of words and had a dumbfounded expression.

“K-Karen-chan, want a bite of my chiffon cake?” (Celestis)

“You can also eat some of my super spicy walleye pollack roe cake.” (Mirack)

Saying this, they both offer me their plates.

“Please stop it! Don’t act so blatantly considerate to me! Also, Mirack-chan, I wouldn’t want to eat a cake that would burn my mouth anyways!!” (Karen)

I was stupid for trusting these two!

Treating me like a pitiful girl that has some loose screws!!

“It can’t be helped, you crazy woman! In that case, let me say this. No matter how impressive his power is, there’s no way a human is a God!!” (Celestis)

“That’s why I said ‘for argument’s sake’, didn’t I! It is not as if I was confident about it when I said it! Celestis-chan, you should at least understand that on your own!” (Karen)

The tension got so high that my tone of voice towards Celestis-chan got rough.

“Whether you are confident about it or not, there’s a limit to what can be brought as a topic of conversation! We are in outline affiliated to the Church! Gods are the most esteemed existences for us, you know! Even if it’s just for a

hypothetical situation of yours, there's no way a God would just be walking around!" (Celestis)

"Ara ara, it is noisy here-desu wa ne."

Our dispute must have been pretty tough for the ears.

The door of the parlor room opened, and a peerless beauty entered the room.

"Ah, Yorishiro-sama!" (Karen)

"Wa?!"

"Founder?!"

The Light Church Founder, Yorishiro-sama.

Hearing that name, Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan jumped up from their seats and stood upright.

"Go ahead and continue as you were. Is it a tea party between heroes? Deepening your friendship is a great thing, isn't it." (Yorishiro)

Saying this, Yorishiro-sama smiles, and at the side of that smiling Yorishiro, there's a dark skin girl of around 14-15 years old.

"Ah, so Doraha-san is with you." (Karen)

"Good day, light hero-sama." (Doraha)

Saying this, Doraha-san gave a polite greeting.

"Yes, good day." (Karen)

The identity of the shadow that we met at the Dark Underworld Country, Doraha-san.

When she was just released from the shadow, she couldn't speak at all and was practically an infant, but after spending her days in Apollon City, her mental capacity recovered at a visible rate, and now, she is already at a level where even if she is standing at the side of Yorishiro-sama as her bodyguard, no one would find it strange.

Thinking about the monument that she left behind at the Underworld

Country, she must have originally been an intelligent girl.

“Ah, if it’s okay with Yorishiro-sama and Doraha-san, how about joining us?”
(Karen)

“I am sorry, I have a meeting I have to attend to. I need to have a talk with the Cardinal and the others about how they are not doing the amount of work that’s fit for their position, and have a discussion about how they are already too old for this...” (Yorishiro)

“I-I see!” (Karen)

Since the time Yorishiro-sama returned from the Underworld Country, it felt like some sort of switch was flipped. She is trying to sweep the decay that has been spreading for a long while in the Light Church.

Haine-san described it as: ‘her olden blood stirring’, but I didn’t really understand.

“Well then, the fire hero Mirack-san and the water hero Celestis-san, think of this Light Grand Church as your own headquarters and relax, okay?” (Yorishiro)

“I-I’m honored!” (Celestis)

““Kay! I mean, thank you very much!” (Mirack)

Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan were completely stiff in front of Yorishiro-sama.

Once the door to the parlor room was closed, they both instantly let out a long sigh.

“...I was so scared, seriously scared. So that’s the infamous Light Founder, Yorishiro-sama huh.” (Celestis)

“This is not my first time meeting her, but that mysterious aura she has is not something one can get used to. The rumor that a person dies every time she smiles must be true.” (Mirack)

The people outside were talking in such a way of Yorishiro-sama?!

Even though she is actually a really good person... Next time, let’s have Yorishiro-sama join us in our tea party.

“...Wait, the conversation derailed just now. As I was saying, there’s no way a God would be walking around just like that, you know! As if it would be so easy to encounter a God!!” (Celestis)

Chapter 103: Hero Alliance

“Celestis-chan, that’s also a bit strayed from the main topic.” (Karen)

“Ah, so you are not going to be talking formally to me anymore huh. Well, that makes it feel as if we are pals now, so it makes me happy though.”
(Celestis)

Celestis-chan at times nonchalantly says embarrassing things.

“Damn it! Until now, the only one that Karen could speak so casually with was me!!” (Mirack)

“You should leave it at that, or people will begin calling you lesbian, you know?” (Celestis)

At any rate, I...I want to help Haine-san who has gone to defeat the Mother Monsters.

But I don’t know where Haine-san went. That’s the problem.

I should have tried asking Yorishiro-sama when she was here.

“Karen-chi as well, how about not getting so worked up and just give it up this time around? It is not like this is your only chance to do go with him anyways.”
(Celestis)

“That’s true, Karen. The duty of us heroes is to protect the people. Shouldn’t you think of it as Haine-san being able to leave without worries thanks to you fortifying the defenses of Apollon City?” (Mirack)

“Those words you said just now, I wish I could have recorded it to send to the people of the Fire Church.” (Celestis)

The two of them are kind.

Right, Haine-san will be returning after a few days anyways.

In that case, I should act as a faithful wife that waits for the return of her husband. Let’s proceed with the other things that should be done.

“And so, there’s actually another thing I would like to consult you two

about..." (Karen)

"Fumu?"

"What is it?" (Celestis)

The two of them casually get ready to listen. So kind.

"I want to form a hero alliance!" (Karen)

The reaction of the two was similar.

"Hero Alliance?" (Mirack)

"What's that?" (Celestis)

It looks like they haven't digested the meaning of it.

"You see, the heroes have been acting separately, right? Shouldering their respective Church on their back, and at times, quarreling with each other. But lately, because of a lot of things occurring, we have been reaching compromises, right?" (Karen)

"That's mostly the deed of one specific person though." (Mirack)

"Now that you mention it, little by little, we have begun getting along."
(Celestis)

Being able to have tea and speaking with each other like this is, in a sense, a sign of progress in itself. And by pushing it even further...

"In this occasion, I want to expand the circle of cooperation between heroes. In other words, I want to create a cooperative structure with us light, fire, water heroes, and also the earth and wind heroes!" (Karen)

That's the Hero Alliance.

Even if we are to help Haine-san's plan in defeating the Mother Monsters, it would be better to have more allies.

Now that there are more than half of the heroes in this side, this is the best opportunity to give shape to a cooperative structure.

"I see. If it's something that Karen-san wants, I have no objections." (Mirack)

"Isn't that fine. If we manage to defeat those so called Mother Monsters, no

doubt we would be heroes that carved their names in history. Increasing our allies as preparation for it, I think it is fine. I want results, but I don't like risks after all." (Celestis)

Ooh, the two are more into it than I thought!

"Then, I would like to contact the earth and wind hero! Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan, have you met them?!" (Karen)

"No." (Mirack)

"Nope." (Celestis)

Uwa...

We suddenly fell into a pit already.

"No one here is acquainted with the earth or the wind hero?" (Karen)

"That way of putting it must mean that Karen-chi also isn't acquainted with them huh. But, it can't be helped, right? To begin with, the place where the Earth Church's headquarter is located, Ishtar Blaze, is crazy far and a national isolation has formed naturally. It seems the Church itself has not had contact for several years as well." (Celestis)

"And we don't even know where the Wind capital Rudra State, where the Wind Church's headquarters is, is located." (Mirack)

It is just as Celestis-chan and Mirack-chan explained.

The Wind Church is specially secretive, and their activities are strictly hidden. It is that type of doctrine. Because of this, the location of Rudra State has not been revealed, and there's even scary rumors that say people who have tried to reveal it have died unnatural deaths. The wind hero that protects this Wind capital has also been shrouded in mystery for a long time.

"Leaving aside wind, as long as we have the resolve to travel a long distance, it is possible to meet the earth hero, but even with a flying machine, it will still be a journey that will take several days, you know." (Mirack)

"Totally a no then. If we were to leave to somewhere so faraway, in the moments where a big monster were to attack our city, we wouldn't be able to assist. Thanks to the flying machines, we heroes have gained quite the freedom

in movement, but there's limits to that." (Celestis)

Groaning with an 'ueee', the upper-half of my body falls onto the table.

What's with this. Everything that I have thought of has been falling into pits one after the other.

We don't know where Haine-san has gone to, so there's no way we can chase after him, and there doesn't seem to be any hope in meeting the earth and wind heroes.

"Ah, right. There's no real need for all three of us to go, right? In the time one of us goes to Ishtar Blaze, the other two can assist in protecting that person's base." (Mirack)

"The Church wouldn't allow that. As I have been saying over and over, the hero has to protect their own base." (Celestis)

I once again groan with an 'ueeee'.

So we have reached a dead end.

Just when I was thinking about ending this meeting as just a tea party where we simply feasted on cake...

A knocking sound reverberated in the parlor room we were relaxing in.

"Pardon the intrusion. Is the hero, Karen-sama, here—"

The one who entered the room was Captain Vesage.

A knight of our Aurora Knight Corps, and a Captain at that, so he is reasonably important.

"Hm? Who is this?" (Mirack)

"Could this be those so called light knights of the Light Church?" (Celestis)

Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan showed interest in Captain Vesage.

In this scenario, I should be introducing them.

"This person here is one of the members of the Aurora Knight Corps, Captain Vesage. And Captain Vesage, you know the people here, right? The fire hero, Katak Mirack; and the water hero—" (Karen)

“Celes-taaaaaaaan?!!!” (Vesage)

Eh? What?!

Captain Vesage fell on his knees the moment he saw Celestis-chan?!

“Eh?! What’s this?! Is he the type that overreacts as a punchline?!” (Celestis)

Celestis-chan was also bewildered.

“Ah, isn’t it that? The one in command when Haine-san was doing that idol hunting thing.” (Mirack)

With the remark of Mirack-chan, I remember that something like that did happen.

“In order to restrain the idol proselytizing of Celestis, they would go to the houses of the metropolitan area, and confiscated all idol goods found. As they got in touch with those items, they were slowly infected as well, and by the time they noticed, they had become fans of Celestis themselves.” (Mirack)

“What, if you are my fan, just say so. It is rare to meet fans of mine outside the Water capital, so I am super happy about it. How about I splurge a bit here and give you an autograph?” (Celestis)

“Stop i~t! Don’t tempt me! But, thank you very much! Thank you very much! To think there would be a day where the picture frame I bought would be of use!” (Vesage)

...I didn’t know Captain Vesage was this kind of person...

Well, that’s fine. All people have an unexpected side to them.

“And so, Captain Vesage, did you have business here? Could it be that monsters have appeared?” (Karen)

“Uwaaa~! I have obtained a heirloom! I am happier than the time I was promoted to captain!! —I mean, excuse me for that, Karen-sama. It is not that big of a matter, but I was searching for assistant Haine, you see. I was wondering if his direct superior, Karen-sama, would know of his whereabouts.” (Vesage)

...Haine-san has become quite the popular one.

But too bad. Haine-san is absent. Hmph hmph.

“Uhm, did you need something from Haine-san? He is unfortunately absent at the moment. If you are okay with me substituting him, can I ask what’s the issue?” (Karen)

“Troubling hero-sama in a small matter like this is unthinkable! It is just that, there’s a report stating that there have been sightings of a suspicious individual walking around the Light metropolitan area, and we wanted the help of assistant Haine to investigate this matter.” (Vesage)

“A suspicious individual?” (Karen)

“Yes. According to the report, ‘a girl that is shouldering a scythe bigger than her own height is walking around the city’.” (Vesage)

That is indeed a suspicious individual.

Chapter 104: Capture

“A scythe bigger than her own height?”

“Moreover, she is shouldering it? What’s with that?”

Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan, who were together with us, naturally ended up hearing the conversation as well, and furrowed their brows at the weirdness of it.

“Hah...hah... Celes-tan in the flesh. Hah... hah...” (Vesage)

“Uhm, Captain-san?” (Celestis)

“Ah, sorry about that, water hero-dono! Though, I have simply received the report and don’t know the details of it. We were thinking of gathering members to head to the location in question.” (Vesage)

A giant scythe huh.

As a weapon, it is on the rare side, but it is true that shouldering something like that and walking in the middle of the city would be dangerous.

“So, you were thinking of adding Haine-san to those members?” (Karen)

“That’s right. It might be unpleasant for Karen-sama to lend your direct subordinate, but I think that there’s the need for assistant Haine’s help in this.” (Vesage)

“Eh? W-Why?!” (Karen)

“It is a loli that is shouldering a giant scythe like the ones used to hunt down lives, you know? No matter how you think about it, this is definitely the job of a straight man to retort to. And when you talk about retorts, it is of course our church assistant, Haine.” (Vesage)

That statement of yours in itself is worth retorting though.

“I see, so that’s how it is.” (Celestis)

“I agree. I agree completely.” (Mirack)

Celestis-chan and Mirack-chan agree to that?!

“B-But Haine-san is currently out because of a task and is not in the Light capital at the moment. This is a problem. If we talk about a person that has retort power on the level of Haine-san, it would be...” (Karen)

In a corner of my heart, I was thinking ‘What the hell am I even saying?’.

“There’s one right here.” (Mirack)

Is what Mirack-chan says as she places a hand on the shoulder of the water hero, Celestis-chan.

“Wait! Stop that. Are you trying to turn me into a straight man character?! An idol is the opposite of that, a profession that teases! And you are telling me that I am a straight man...the role of being teased? In order to survive the entertainment world, this is a technique that I have to refine for my incoming inauguration day. The most important stance as a professional! ...Okay, let’s go.” (Celestis)

Celestis-chan seems to be proactive about this.

“Celes-tan in the flesh will be descending in this day to our Apollon City?!No no, that’s not the issue here. No matter how you put it, isn’t this bad?! Troubling the hand of a foreign hero to assist in the territory of the Light Church is just...!” (Vesage)

Captain Vesage had a point.

“Celestis-chan, I will be going. The Light Church should be the one dealing with the incidents that occur in Apollon City. In this time when Haine-san is absent, I as the hero have to work hard for his share as well!” (Karen)

“But, will you be okay? No matter how I see it, you are more like the type that receives the retorts, right?” (Celestis)

“Moreover, the airheaded type.” (Mirack)

Eh?

Am I being seen in such a way?

And so, the tea party between heroes was temporarily suspended.

We are now in the metropolitan area of Apollon City.

“In the end, Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan came along with us... You could have stayed in the room.” (Karen)

“What are you saying! Karen, if you are going to be heading out to a fight, then I can’t just relax about! If there’s the chance, I will save you from crisis and gain points!” (Mirack)

“Also, that suspicious individual has piqued my curiosity. Why is she shouldering a giant scythe? I feel like I won’t be able to sleep tonight unless I hear of the reason clearly.” (Celestis)

The two of them are so carefree.

But it is true that this is a matter that feels like we can take it more at ease than fighting monsters. Can’t lower my guard though. Let’s catch that suspicious person quickly and return to our tea party.

“But, now that we are searching...where should we tackle first?” (Karen)

We have divided in groups with Captain Vesage to cover more ground, but for now, we haven’t even seen a shadow of where she could be.

According to the information, she should stick out like a sore thumb, so I was expecting we would find her immediately but...

“Oi, Karen.” (Mirack)

“Yes?”

“Isn’t it that?” (Mirack)

As expected, we easily found her.

There she is, that’s certainly her. At the place where Mirack-chan is pointing, there’s a scythe.

When I saw it at first, I thought that it was a scythe walking on its own. But that’s not it. There’s a small girl carrying that giant scythe at its base.

Her age should be around 12-13 years old. She is a lot younger than us. And her body build is small. That’s why, the giant scythe that would normally be held by a large build man had so much left over when held by such a small

body. Her every step while shouldering that thing is dangerous.

Staggering to the right, staggering to the left; just holding it makes it a dangerous weapon, and the people in the surroundings are scared off their wits.

Looks like we have to hurry and secure her.

When I was about to approach her... the sound of a big bell resounded.

It was the bell of the clock tower that informed of the time.

It is a tall building in the main street of Apollon City, and it has a big clock that can be seen even from afar. A bell tower that rings at a specific time.

The architecture of the building is already a few decades old, and its design has charm, so it has become one of the sightseeing spots of Apollon City.

The clock tower was emitting a *gon, gon, gon, gon* sound, and yet...

“Hiwawawawawa?!”

The scythe girl reacted excessively at it.

She grew flustered, lost her wits, and the scythe that was already dangerous just by holding it, was now shaking heavily to the sides.

“Watch out!!”

All the heroes reacted to this.

The fastest one was the water hero, Celestis-chan.

“[Water Bag]!” (Celestis)

The water stream that was released from Miki Moses coiled around the scythe girl like a snake and envelops her.

It was a feat that can only done with high control of water divine power.

By imprisoning the scythe girl inside a cell of water, we eliminate the damage it might cause.

Is what I thought but...

Pang!

With a single swing of the scythe, the water prison was broken and became small droplets.

“Wa?!”

Celestis-chan was shocked by how her own technique was broken.

“My ‘Water Bag’ was destroyed?! Could it be...earth divine power?!” (Celestis)

In that time, Mirack-chan and I didn’t stop our legs.

The preemptive strike of Celestis-chan was broken, but it served as an effective diversion, and we succeeded in getting a pincer attack on her.

The holy sword, Saint-George, and the fire knuckles, Barbarossa, pressure the scythe girl from both sides.

Yeah, it was good timing.

We may bicker a lot, but the team coordination of us three has gotten better.

“Don’t move. If you get violent here, you will be immediately shot with fire and light divine power.” (Mirack)

“Sorry for being rough with you here. But having you wielding such a dangerous thing in the middle of the city is troubling.” (Karen)

Will the girl be obedient?

After remonstrating her, we waited for the other side’s reaction, and...

“.....Ah’m sorry.”

As the girl apologizes, she began to cry a river.

“Waaaa~n! Ah’m sorry! I just got scared with th’ sudden big sound-dasu! In mah village, th’ only time a big sound like that be made is when the fields be catching fire-dasu yo~!”

“E~h?!” “W-What’s going on?!”

Mirack-chan and I were both surprised by this disgraceful behaviour.

“I suddenly got attacked-dasu! Scary! The city be seriously scary-dasu yo! So country bumpkins be getting their heads chopped off-dasu ka yo~!”

After she said this, we tried to soothe her, and the name we somehow got

was...

Gonbee Sasae.

The earth hero that was dispatched by the Earth Church in Ishtar Blaze.

Chapter 105: Small hero

Earth hero, Gonbee Sasae.

The girl certainly did introduce herself as that.

The hero representing the Earth Church that worships one of the five Gods of Creation, Mother Earth Mantle-sama.

Why is the earth hero, who is supposed to be at the faraway Ishtar Blaze, here?

“There’s no mistake.” (Karen)

I compared the big scythe she was holding with the one illustrated in a book, and voiced out this conclusion.

“This scythe is the Earth Scythe, Seeta. It is a divine tool in the possession of the Earth Church, and ranks at the highest.” (Karen)

It is an object that lines up with my Saint-George; the Barbarossa of Mirack-chan; and the Miki-Moses of Celestis-chan.

The book we borrowed from the Light Grand Library, ‘the faraway unexplored region, approaching the mystery of Ishtar Blaze -Compilation-’, had this information written, so there’s no mistake.

“She was lend such an important thing. That means, she can’t be no other than the earth hero, but...” (Karen)

Mirack-chan, Celestis-chan, and I gather our attention at one place.

At the suspicious individual that we brought here from the city, the small girl.

“De-de-de-de-deeeli~~sh-dasu.” (Sasae)

We are at the parlor room we were originally having a tea party in.

After calming down the commotion in the middle of Apollon City, we brought this girl -Gonbee Sasae-chan- no questions asked.

We also contacted Captain Vesage who was searching the area, and the matter of the suspicious individual was wrapped up for now.

It can be said that it hasn't been completely wrapped up yet and simply moved to the next stage though.

To begin with, this place was being used to have nonsensical girl's talk, and we only left once and returned after, so the atmosphere still remains. The tea was still there, the cake and the cream-filled pastry as well, so when we offered it to Sasae-chan, she began overindulging.

First, she grabbed the target cake with both hands and brought it to her mouth.

nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom

After filling her mouth completely, she swallowed.

nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom nom

After filling her mouth completely, she swallowed.

What's with this cute critter. She is so cute, I want to continue feeding her more.

"Hah~, so cute. She is so cute, the heavens might split apart~~."

And, there was one person who was being killed by that cuteness.

Since way back, Mirack-chan has been weak to this kind of people that stir you to protect them after all -like in my childhood when I was sickly.

"Now now, if you eat so fast, your throat will get hurt, you know? You should drink tea here, and take a break first." (Mirack)

"Ah'm sorry. I was getting thirsty, so this be right in time-nasu~~ gulp gulp—HOT!" (Sasae)

"Ah?! I'm sorry, did you have a sensitive tongue?! Okay, let me cool it down for you. Fuh~ Fuh~" (Mirack)

This Mirack-chan is no good. I have to do something about this quick.

But it is a pain, so I won't do anything.

"But why is the earth hero in Apollon City? Ishtar Blaze is so far it would take several months by foot, right? As expected, isn't this some sort of misunderstanding?" (Karen)

“No, there’s no doubt this girl is the earth hero.” (Celestis)

Celestis-chan who was at my side made a serious expression.

“This girl broke my ‘Water Bag’ with one attack. Only the earth element would be able to accomplish that. Due to the element affinities, the one that wins against water is earth. Earth absorbs water infinitely, and in time, it will swallow it completely.” (Celestis)

So she is talking about the fight that occurred in the middle of the city.

It is true that it was shocking how that scythe was able to easily break through the skill of Celestis-chan who was the fastest of us three in attacking.

“What? Hm, could it be...you are frustrated by it?” (Mirack)

Mirack-chan throwed a completely smug face at Celestis-chan and draws closer to her.

“Right. The water element can’t lift a finger against the earth element after all. Well, there’s many moments when you turn

useless

because the affinity is bad. This time, you were not blessed with the compatibility, so you were

useless

! Anyways, it happens, so burn in frustration as much as you want.” (Mirack)

“Aah, so annoying! You-are-annoying!!” (Celestis)

Mirack-chan has been teasing Celestis-chan a lot lately.

Could it be that she is still hung on the fight with the Great Sea Dragon we had before? Was she still bothered by how her fire element had bad affinity against the water element?

“More importantly, the problem is this girl!” (Celestis)

Celestis-san points strongly at the little girl that was still nomming without caring at all about our dispute.

“What did the earth hero come here to do in such a faraway place from her

headquarters?! Moreover, this is the headquarters of the Light Church! If handled poorly, this might even become a diplomatic problem. We have to make her talk, or we can't release her!" (Celestis)

"...Dasu?" (Sasae)

Being threatened, Sasae-chan blinked in surprise for a moment, but she soon made an expression as if she remembered something...

"Ah, shoot-dasuuu~~!!" (Sasae)

And screamed.

What is it this time?

"Founder-sama told me 'don't follow strangers', and yet, I easily be following them-dasu!! This be bad-dasu! I be kept as livestock, be domesticated, and be demanded a ransom-dasu!!" (Sasae)

Eeeh?! Reacting to that this late?!

"I-It's okay, Sasae-chan. I am also a hero. The light hero of this Apollon City, Kourin Karen. I am by no means a suspicious individual." (Karen)

"Not only that, I ended eatin' all grub they brought me!! They are definitely gonna demand crazy cash, and the moment they be knowing I can't spit it out, they will turn around their attitude and say 'In that case, we got no choice but to have you pay with that body, little lady', and be sold away!!!" (Sasae)

"Not happening, not happening." (Karen)

This is a problem. This girl is the type that naturally ignores what others say.

"Uhm, Sasae-chan, it is okay. We are not scary people. We just want to ask you a few things." (Karen)

"That be a lie-dasu!! Founder-sama and Bishop-sama told me that the city people all be liars-dasu!! Ya be thinking that just because I am a country bumpkin you can pull the wool on me easily!!" (Sasae)

"That's not true... We simply want to ask you about a few things—" (Karen)

"What do ya wanna hear about?! Mah security number? I won't be telling ya-dasu yo!" (Sasae)

What's a security number?

The conversation is not getting through at all with this girl. Maybe this is called country bumpkin complex; because of that, she is under the impression that everything related to the city is evil.

“Anyways, the city be scary-dasu! It be way too cruel for a country bumpkin to survive-dasu! But, in order to fulfill the oracle given by Mother Earth God-sama, I be pushing like rabbit in season-dasu yo!!” (Sasae)

Chapter 106: Stubborn one

“An oracle from the Mother Earth God?” (Karen)

What Sasae-chan slipped piqued my interest.

“Did you come to Apollon City with that as the reason? What is the Mother Earth God having you do?” (Karen)

“Fufufufu. Ya see-dasu na~, this be an important mission only the earth hero can accomplish-dasu.” (Sasae)

For some reason, she began speaking with a boasting tone.

“That be right, it was in a regular morning. Woken up by the cry of the roosters, I was about to head to work on the fields...when it happened. The weed be growin’ pretty thickly, so I be thinkin’ about cutting it down, ya know.” (Sasae)

“You are going pretty far back in your story huh...” (Celestis)

Celestis-chan, who was listening by my side, fiddled her hair with an irritated expression.

“To begin with, our Earth Church be standing on the motto of living together with nature! Plowing the land, and wakin’ for the land. That be the most basics of a human, and this be the way of living that brings about good fortune, and this be what Mother Earth God-sama preaches-dasu!” (Sasae)

“And she regressed to even deeper fundamental structure?!” (Celestis)

But that stupid-cuteness of hers charmed Mirack-chan even more.

“That’s why, I -the earth hero-can’t slacken on the work at the fields-dasu! With each swing, each time the hoe be hitting the ground, I give mah gratitude to Mother Earth God-sama. Once I be finished with separating the fields, the earth be giving me back in the form of beautiful crops-dasu!” (Sasae)

“U-Uhm, I understand already, so, about that oracle the Mother Earth God-sama gave you...” (Karen)

“Ah, right-dasu na! I was suddenly called by the Founder-sama and attended

the Earth Grand Crimson Palace still in mah work clothes-dasu yo! What they told me that time be—" (Sasae)

"..."

Eh?

This girl stopped in the most important part.

"—!! Close! I was almost caught in a leading question! The city people are truly good at fooling people-dasu yo! But it be okay! I didn't crock a single fly about the important bits-dasu!" (Sasae)

So she noticed!

But, we didn't do any sort of leading though. This country girl is seriously tough.

Even though she spills so much out of her mouth, the parts that we really want to hear, she guards them with pinpoint accuracy.

"...You say that but..." (Celestis)

At this moment, Celestis-chan, who was finally out of her dumbstruck state, joined the conversation.

"You -the earth hero-stepping inside the headquarters of a different church of yours, moreover, without permission; do you understand how big that is? The heroes are in basis the face of the Church, and their strongest fighting force. It is like the tip of the sword. And if that tip of the sword were to enter the another territory on their own whim, it can be taken as a declaration of war." (Celestis)

Hearing this, I looked back at my own past actions and thought 'I really did some outrageous things huh'.

"Moreover, you even created a small commotion in the city. In order to vindicate that you hold no hostility, don't you think there's the need to explain the reason why you came all the way here? But well, if you really just came here to pick a fight, you wouldn't have any reason to explain anyways." (Celestis)

"And, who are ya-dasu ka?" (Sasae)

Even when being pushed with such threatening tone, Sasae-chan was still going at her own pace.

“Guh... Can’t be helped. Even if I am an idol, the popularity wave of Celes-tan still hasn’t reached the countryside huh. Fine, I will grant you the honor. I am the water hero, Celestis. And while I’m at it, that muscle lesbian there is the fire hero, Mirack.” (Celestis)

“Did you just insult me real hard as an afterthought?” (Mirack)

Everyone ignored the complaint of Mirack-chan.

“Hoheh~, then, everyone here is a hero-dasu ka? This be the first time I see the other heroes-dasu yo.” (Sasae)

“I am also surprised at this first encounter of ours. To think the earth hero was a loli that was so difficult to hold a conversation with.” (Celestis)

Celestis-chan, please don’t lose your composure, okay?

The other party is still a child after all.

“But but, this is the city of the Light Church-san, right-dasu na? Why are the water and fire heroes here-dasu?” (Sasae)

“Nuguh!!” (Celestis)

“I be an outsider, but isn’t the water and fire heroes the same-dasu ka? Why are ya here-dasu? Ya here to pick a fight-dasu ka?” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan looks as if she doesn’t understand the conversation, and yet, she stabs at the parts that hurt.

“About that, I will explain.” (Mirack)

Is what Mirack-chan says as she tags in.

“Celestis and I were invited here by the light hero Karen. That’s why there’s no problem at all.” (Mirack)

“You were invited here-dasu ka?!” (Sasae)

“That’s right. We three had a lot going on between us, but now, we have formed an alliance, and are incredibly friendly with each other. That’s why, even if we enter the other’s territory, it won’t turn into a fight!” (Mirack)

“That be incredible-dasu! So movin’-dasu! Can heroes become friends-dasu ka?!” (Sasae)

“Of course. If you feel like it, we will be happy to welcome you -the earth hero-into our hero alliance!” (Mirack)

“Seriously-dasu ka?! I don’t understand this hero alliance thing, but it sounds hella cool-dasu! Please let me join-dasu!” (Sasae)

“Fine, we won’t close our doors to someone that wishes to join!!” (Mirack)

And so, like this, Sasae-chan became our comrade.

...Hm?

“In that case, secrets shouldn’t be kept between friends-dasu na! I be tellin’ ya why I am here-dasu!!” (Sasae)

Eh?

We had so much trouble making her talk, and yet, now she is so easily willing to...

Mirack-chan turns her head in my direction and gives me a thumbs up.

It can’t be helped that she is feeling proud of it. She even made progress in the matter of the hero alliance that I spoke of not that long ago.

“Mirack-chi, why are you the one making a breakthrough in the situation? So nauseating.” (Celestis)

“I accomplished something, and yet, what’s with that treatment?!” (Mirack)

Celestis-chan, can you stop stirring things up already?

“Now then, heroes from other lands! Once again, mah name is Gonbee Sasae, the earth hero-dasu! I be inexperienced, but please take care of me-da!” (Sasae)

“You got it. If you have any problems, you can come consult me anytime you want!” (Mirack)

“Hah...can’t be helped. She is cute, so I will welcome her.” (Celestis)

Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan were able to accept this super sudden turn of

events.

And I...

“Sasae-chan, here as well. I am the light hero that protects this Apollon City, name is Kourin Karen.” (Karen)

“Yes-nasu! Light hero-san be a damn good lookin’ babe-dasu na!” (Sasae)

We exchange a light handshake.

“So, returning to the original topic, Sasae-chan, why did you come to Apollon City? Coming all the way from the Earth Church to the Light Church. Did you have something you wanted to tell us?” (Karen)

“Right-dasu! Now that it be come to this, I would like Karen-sa to cooperate as well-dasu! To accomplish the mission given to me by Mother Earth God-sama!” (Sasae)

And then, Sasae-chan revealed the objective of why she came to Apollon City.

“To subjugate the personification of the evil Dark God Entropy, Kuromiya Haine-dasu!” (Sasae)

Chapter 107: Wicked Oracle

For a second, I doubted my ears.

“Eh? Uhm...sorry. Can you repeat that?” (Karen)

“As I said, I be told to erase the personification of the evil Dark God Entropy, Kuromiya Haine-dasu! That’s what I was told in the oracle of Mother Earth God-sama-dasu!” (Sasae)

As I thought, I really didn’t hear wrong.

But, I couldn’t understand it at all.

I was really familiar with the name that was spoken by Sasae-chan who I had just met today.

“?!”

When I turn my head, I could see the bewildered expressions of Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan.

“What is the meaning of this?” (Mirack)

“I don’t know. We should ask this girl in more detail.” (Celestis)

It is as Celestis-chan said.

We decided on listening to a bit more of what Sasae-chan has to say.

“I was called by the Founder-sama and was told this-dasu.” (Sasae)

Summing up the story of Sasae-chan, the Earth Founder-sama got an oracle from the Mother Earth God, Mantle-sama. And then, in that oracle, he was instructed to erase the Dark God Entropy, Haine-san.

“According to the oracle, Entropy apparently be an incredibly dangerous and scary God-dasu. And this God be disguised as a human and slipped into this world-dasu.” (Sasae)

‘If we let it be, the world will fall into calamity for sure’, being told this via the Founder, she was ordered to head to the place where the Dark God Entropy is, the place where Haine-san is.

“And I, carrying this important task, departed from Ishtar Blaze-no dasu! The oracle said that Kuromiya Haine be in Apollon City, so I headed straight here-dasu!” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan says eloquently.

“I was scared of the people outside, so I thoroughly bounced all settlements-dasu! Advancing through pathless paths, tearing off the bark of trees, eating boiled grass, and after an unwavering month, I finally arrived at Apollon City-dasu!” (Sasae)

“What a wild life!” (Mirack)

“Is there any meaning in going so far to avoid people?!” (Celestis)

Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan were shocked by how harsh the journey of Sasae-chan was.

But that wasn’t the issue I was bothered with right now.

“Finally arriving at mah destination, I be thinking of how to search fer Kuromiya Haine-dasu yo. But, am glad-dasu. Meeting such nice people. If ye can, please help m—” (Sasae)

“That’s a lie!!”

The loud shout I let out made Sasae-chan shrink her shoulders.

“What you said is all a lie! There’s no way Entropy-sama would be an evil God! There’s no way Haine-san would be scheming something evil! It is obvious that it is all a lie! Did you come all the way here from Ishtar Blaze just to spread those delusions?! That’s just way too much of a pain!” (Karen)

“Wait, Karen! Calm down!” (Mirack)

Being seized by Mirack-chan, my words finally cut off.

But at that time, as if natural, the expression of Sasae-chan froze.

“Wa, Karen-chi, don’t go losing your steam on a little girl you just met. Well, it is not like I don’t understand how you feel though.” (Celestis)

“I am sorry... But, there’s no way Haine-san is the enemy of the world. Something like that is impossible. Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan understand

that as well, right?" (Karen)

The two know Haine-san in person.

They should know about the many people that he has protected.

"Don't worry, Karen. We also don't think of him as such an evil individual."
(Mirack)

"That's right. As a hero, I am pretty confident in my eye for people. Haine-chi may have a bit of a sadistic side, but he is in basis a good person." (Celestis)

I was a bit relieved by the words of those two, and regain my calm.

"But then, why did the Earth Church give out such an oracle? That's the issue here." (Karen)

"Right. Since the name of the Dark God Entropy has come out, I can't think the existence of that oracle is a lie in itself... Leaving aside for now the heavily retortable part about Haine-chi being the personification of the Dark God."
(Celestis)

An oracle is a core factor in representing the holiness of the five Churches.

The words of a God can be directly told to people. The only ones who can receive those oracles are the Founders of their respective church.

It seems each Church has different ways to receive the oracle, but the contents of it are varied as well.

Predicting the future correctly, telling ways to counter disasters that humans wouldn't be able to deal with, and it is said that there's even times when they are told the weaknesses of the enemy's army in war.

Since the early periods of history, the reason why the five Churches were able to grow bigger in influence was because they were able to control information. Because of this, even if an oracle are seen as proof of the Gods having a direct connection with the Church, an oracle is also something absolute.

"But, if that oracle of the Earth Church is true, then there's a point that bothers me." (Celestis)

"And that is?" (Karen)

It seems Celestis-chan has noticed something. I ask her about it as if clinging to it.

“If it is as what the oracle says, that Haine-chi is an existence that is overwhelmingly dangerous to this world, then why is that danger only being warned by Mantle?” (Celestis)

“Ah.”

“If it is an evil existence that can throw the world into predicament, the other Gods would also give out warnings and raise the awareness of it. But, at the very least, an oracle like that hasn’t been received from my Water Church. What about you girls?” (Celestis)

Celestis-chan’s gaze moves equally between Mirack-chan and I.

“I haven’t heard of it either. Thinking about the personality of our Founder, I don’t think they would hide anything.” (Mirack)

“In my Light Church too! Yorishiro-sama is a person that would say things that feel like they have a hidden meaning, but...but when it is about Haine-san, there’s no lie!” (Karen)

I-Isn’t that right, Yorishiro-sama?

“In that case, it really is strange that only the Earth Church received an oracle. Hey, Sasae-chan, can you please tell us your story in more detail? First, when was the specific time this oracle was received.....” (Celestis)

Celestis-chan turned the conversation to Sasae-chan, and, at that moment, she noticed the discomforting atmosphere.

The atmosphere that Sasae-chan was forming, it was a completely different color from the ones until now.

“...Liar-dasu.” (Sasae)

“Eh?”

“As I thought, the city people be all crying wolf-dasu! Baiting ya with kind words. I thought ye were people I could trust, so I told ye about the story of Founder-sama, and yet, ye all called me a liar!! As I thought, the city people be all scary-dasu! Can’t trust ‘em-dasu! I ain’t stayin’ in a place like this!!” (Sasae)

Saying this, Sasae-chan runs and pushes the door as if tackling it.

“Sasae-chan?!” (Karen)

“Crap! After her!!” (Mirack)

“No other choice. Good grief!!” (Celestis)

Mirack-chan, Celestis-chan, and I chased after Sasae-chan.

Chapter 108: Pursuit

What should I do? It is my fault.

While running through the Light Grand Church at full-throttle, I was tormented with self-deprecation.

Even though we had gotten along...

The earth hero, Gonbee Sasae-chan.

For the first time since she was born, she left her homeland, and in the strange land she had arrived and was on the peak of helplessness, she would meet the first people she could open her heart to.

Those people were supposed to be us, and yet, I was unable to accept what she had said, and rejected it all along with her very self.

With this, it feels as if I made her trust us just to betray her.

Right now, the meaning of what she said about that oracle doesn't matter.

I have to catch up with Sasae-chan and apologize as soon as possible.

The chances of Sasae-chan still being inside the Grand Church is high.

It is big and easy to get lost in here after all.

There's a chance that Mirack-chan or Celestis-chan, who separated to cover more ground, will find her sooner than me, but I have to make sure to be the first one to find her, and apologize properly to her.

"Uwa?!"

"Karen?!"

In the middle of it, I stumbled upon Mirack-chan at a turn.

"How was it?! Did you find Sasae-chan?!" (Karen)

"Not even a shadow! If we have met here, it must mean that she wasn't in your search area either. In that case...!" (Mirack)

Is what we were thinking when...

Zudon, a sound strong enough to make the whole building tremble reverberated.

When I look out from the window that was close by, I could see a waterspout from afar. There's no doubt that's the work of Celestis-chan.

"That direction is...the outside plaza?!" (Karen)

"What is that woman doing?!" (Mirack)

At any rate, there's no doubt that something happened.

This is no moment to be caring about manners. I jump from the window, and control the fall with my light divine power, and head at full speed towards the waterspout.

"?! Hey, wait, Karen!" (Mirack)

Mirack-chan followed after.

This Light Grand Church is my base, that's why I can tell. The place where the waterspout came from is the plaza. It is normally used as a training space for the people of the Aurora Knight Corps.

That's why it is wide without any obstructions, so there's no problems in having a waterspout as big as that being made, but...but why did Celestis-chan do that kind of technique in the first place?

* * *

...While I was thinking that, we arrived.

The first thing that entered my vision was the back of Celestis-chan.

"Aah, you are finally here. I was waiting!!"

It hasn't been long since we split to search, and yet, Celestis-chan was talking as if we haven't met for several years already.

"Celestis-chan! Did something happen?!" (Karen)

"Instead of explaining, it would be faster to just see it with your own eyes! Look at that!" (Celestis)

And then, being suggested by Celestis-chan, I look, and...

“?!! Monster.” (Karen)

That’s right. There’s a monster in the training grounds.

It is the first time I have seen this type, but there’s no doubt that this is a monster.

It is big and humanoid. From what I see, it is made up from what seems to be minerals.

The looks of monsters are normally uniform. If it’s fire element, it is a land beast type; if it’s water element, it would be a fish or a water lifeform; if it’s wind element, it would be an insect type.

But this is the first time I see this type of monster. It gives a different kind of atmosphere from the Dark Giant-san we met in the Great Sea Dragon battle. Just what in the world...

Since this is a training ground, there’s -as expected-many light knights that were here in the middle of training, and were now surprised by the sudden appearance of a monster and were agitated.

“To think a monster would appear in a place like this! And so, Celestis, what happened to Sasae?!” (Mirack)

Mirack-chan who had finally caught up, asks this from Celestis.

“...She is right there, you know.” (Celestis)

“Eh?”

“As I said, she is there! Look, over there!!” (Celestis)

In the place where Celestis-chan points at, at the aforementioned monster.

I was wondering what she was saying so I strain my eyes to see, and what I saw was...a girl standing at the back of the giant earth humanoid.

“Sasae-chan?!” (Karen)

Why is she at a place like that? She is close to the point that you could say she is clinging to the leg of the monster!

“Why is she at such a place?! That’s dangerous! Hurry and get away!” (Karen)

“Shut up-dasu!”

Words of denial that felt as if they pierced at me.

“Every one of you! All the city people be enemies-dasu! My only ally be this child-dasu! ‘Golem Boy’! Kick ‘em away, don’t let ‘em get close!!” (Sasae)

Saying this, the humanoid monster rushes at us as if it were following her desires.

“Uwa?!”

I fall back in order to evade.

And so, Sasae-chan stood alone at the place where the humanoid monster was before, and takes something out from the rucksack she had brought for her journey.

“What’s that? A brick?” (Karen)

“Crap! Again?!” (Celestis)

Seeing that brick, Celestis-chan gets agitated.

“That girl, is she thinking of making more of those?!” (Celestis)

“Making? More of those?” (Karen)

“I had found that girl and cornered her all the way here. After that, that girl took out a brick that looked similar to the one she has now, and wrote something on it. And when she did that, the earth and stones in the surroundings of the block began to gather, and what came out of it is the giant thing that you see now before your eyes!!” (Celestis)

Eh? Then—!

The two blocks that Sasae-chan is holding currently in her hands are—!!

“C’mere! ‘Golem Father’, ‘Golem Mother’!!” (Sasae)

Chapter 109: Puppet Sumo

There's a total of three.

Right in front of us, monsters we have never seen before had appeared.

The three shared the trait that they were all earth puppets.

“‘Golem Boy’!”

The first one to appear from the earth humanoids.

As of now, it is the smallest one of them, but even with that, it easily surpasses the height of a man at his prime.

“‘Golem Mother’!”

And there's the one that slightly surpasses the small one, but is a slim figured earth humanoid.

“And ‘Golem Father’!!”

And finally, there's the biggest one of all three, and even its physique was that of a heavyweight.

“‘Golem Family’!! Defeat dem scary city people-dasu!” (Sasae)

As if obeying the orders of Sasae-chan, the earth humanoids take a stance towards us.

Seeing this, I couldn't help but be bewildered.

“Hey! Are we in a dream right now?!” (Mirack)

“Is a hero controlling monsters?! What's that? It doesn't make sense!”
(Celestis)

Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan were both bewildered as well.

Heroes exist to defeat monsters.

They fight against the monsters that attack humans, defeat them, and protect them; it can even be called our *raison d'être*.

And a hero is utilizing the monsters that are our natural enemies?

But we don't have the leeway to space out right now.

Right now, those very monsters are about to attack us after all.

"Uwa?!"

"At any rate, return fire! The light knights in the surroundings!! This is too much for you guys to handle. Don't get close, got it?!" (Mirack)

Since this is the training grounds of the Aurora Knight corps, many light knights were there.

Mirack-chan gave orders to them, and stopped any disorder before it happened.

There's three earth humanoids attacking us.

There's three heroes on our side.

The numbers are the same, but even with that, I can't say that this is a favorable situation.

"Sasae-chan!!" (Karen)

It naturally turned into each one of us dealing with one earth humanoid.

The one I had to deal with was the middle-sized slim doll. While evading the chops it was swinging, I shout at Sasae-chan.

"What is this?! What's going on?! Why is a hero using monsters?!" (Karen)

"What-suka? Yer a city folk, yet ya ain't knowing Golems-dasu ka?" (Sasae)
Golems?!

"Golems be the blessing of Mother Earth God-sama-dasu! They help us in anything and are the friends of humans-dasu! They don't lie to me like ye guys. They be trustworthy fellows-dasu!!" (Sasae)

"Ugh!"

Those words became a thorn that pierced right through my chest.

I want to apologize with all I have, but the situation is not allowing me to do that.

"Karen!!"

Mirack-chan, who was in the same battle conditions, overlapped her back with mine.

Being the one that proclaims herself to be the strongest, Mirack-chan has been charged to deal with the strongest looking one, the 'Father'.

"This is bad, Karen! That Celestis is being pushed back!" (Mirack)

"Eh?!"

When I looked, Celestis-chan was fighting with the smallest one -'Boy'-, but even with that, her situation was unfavorable.

"[Water Wrath]!" (Celestis)

The water bullet that came out from Miki-Moses struck directly at the Golem, but there wasn't any effect. It became a sad splash at the face of the Golem's sturdy body and was swallowed by the earth.

"[Water Wrath]! [Water Wrath]! [Water Wrath]! Huuuh~, as expected, it has absolutely no effect~~!" (Celestis)

In terms of elemental affinity, earth is the worst possible opponent for water. It looks like that law is definite here.

"I will provide support! Karen, please hold back the other two!" (Mirack)

"Got it!" (Karen)

Mirack-chan and I both revolve with our backs still sticking to each other, and then, at the gaze of Mirack-chan, there's the small-sized Golem and Celestis-chan; at my gaze, there's the two other Golems. A nice positioning was formed.

"[Holy Light Blade]!" (Karen)

"[Flame Knuckle]!" (Mirack)

The 'Holy Light Blade', that I held back when releasing, knocks down both of the Golems in front of me. Because of this, I was able to stop their movements just as planned.

On the other hand, the fire bullet that Mirack-chan released from the fire fist Barbarossa hit the small Golem, blew it away, and saved Celestis-chan from her predicament.

“Thanks! You saved me there!” (Celestis)

Because the Golem was blown away and she had gotten distance from it, Celestis-chan runs to where we are in order to strengthen the defense.

“You really are useless! Can’t you conquer something measly like affinities?!” (Mirack)

“Shad up! I’m throwing those words right back at you, you useless woman in the Great Sea Dragon battle!” (Celestis)

Mirack-chan probably said this with the intentions of getting back at Celestis-chan for before.

At that time, Celestis-chan said as much as she wanted at Mirack-chan after all.

“At any rate, we are talking about affinities here, so how about we just slap it with the element that is strong against it! What was the element that was strong against earth again?” (Mirack)

“The wind element! There’s none here!!” (Celestis)

The wind element that dries the earth, and disperses the sand, is the natural enemy of the earth hero and the earth monsters in general.

But the person that possesses this element is not within our group!

“Ah geez! Why is it that we are gathering at a decent pace, and yet, we can’t get the ones that are needed at the desired moments?! If that chibi had been in our fight with the Great Sea Dragon, it would have helped us out a lot!” (Celestis)

Is she talking about Sasae-chan who is currently antagonistic towards us?

“So noisy! If you were at the time we fought the fire cow Phalaris, you would have at least been useful!” (Mirack)

And Mirack-chan bites at it.

But that’s not it.

It is true that the current situation is bad, but there’s a reality we have to pay more attention to.

“Sasae-chan!” (Karen)

I call the girl that was at the other side of the Golems.

Chapter 110: Missing each other

“Sasae-chan!” (Karen)

My shout made the small shoulders of the girl at the other side of the Golems tremble.

“Sorry for what I did before! Shouting at you...saying that you were a liar! I was just surprised by what you said. That’s why I unintentionally lost it there!” (Karen)

I really don’t know what to say to regain the trust of Sasae-chan.

But this is what’s necessary. Rather than pinning her down by force, I have to tell her how I feel by wringing out the words inside of me.

That’s why, even if I don’t know what to say yet, I let everything come out from my mouth.

“I am truly sorry for scaring you. Coming to an unknown land on your own, you were feeling lonely, and yet, I didn’t think about your feelings at all. But even if you rampage here, nothing will be resolved. Put back these Golems and let’s have a calm talk once again, okay?” (Karen)

“I am not going to fall fer yer lies again!” (Sasae)

But what came back at me was rejection.

“I can tell. Ye girls know Kuromiya Haine, right?” (Sasae)

“?! ”

Being hit right in the mark, I was left speechless.

“That’s why ye got so panicked by it. Ya desperately tried to deny it. Mother Earth God-sama told us Kuromiya Haine be the personification of an evil God-da.” (Sasae)

“But that must be some sort of mistake!” (Karen)

“See?! Ya have showed yer true hide! The light hero be colluding with the evil God-da! If ya be denying the words of Mother Earth God-sama, that makes ye

the enemy of Mother Earth God-sama. In other words, the enemy of the Earth Church; in other words, mah enemy! Golems, smash-da!!” (Sasae)

As if chains had been broken, the three Golems attack us at the command of Sasae-chan.

Mirack-chan, Celestis-chan, and I were parrying those attacks while jumping around.

“Ah geez! Country bumpkins are normally high in the clouds, and yet, they get sharp at the weirdest of timings! The moment she doubts us, she is incredibly thorough about it!” (Celestis)

“So once we doubt her God, she immediately deems them as enemies huh! This might be the correct reaction as a hero representing the church though!” (Mirack)

Celestis-chan and Mirack-chan, this is no time to be complaining.

As I thought, we really do have to do something about these Golems first or we won’t even be able to have a calm conversation.

There’s the risk that we might drag Sasae-chan into it, so we can’t use any big moves, but we can’t be leisure here.

I gather light divine power in my holy sword Saint-George, and instead of releasing it, I increase the sharpness of the sword itself.

“[Holy Light Edge]!” (Karen)

The swung blade easily cuts both slim arms of the Golem.

“Well done! As expected of the all-purpose Light element!” (Celestis)

“Against the earth element, not only is Celestis completely useless, my fire element is not working effectively either. So the light element that is slightly stronger than all the other elements truly does shine at this kind of times!” (Mirack)

The truly all-purpose one is Haine-san’s dark element though.

In the journey to the Underworld Country, my light element was completely useless, so it is good that I managed to regain some confidence now, but...

“At any rate, right now we have to defeat the Golems and calm down the situation!” (Karen)

As the light hero, I have the duty to calm down this disturbance that’s occurring in my base, Apollon City.

I can’t just neglect that duty of mine.

“I am sorry, Sasae-chan! I will get a bit rough!” (Karen)

“Don’t get ahead of yerself-dasu yo! Ye allies of the evil God!!” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan is completely seeing us as an evil existence!

“I’ll be showing ya the true power of the earth hero now! ‘Golem Father’! We going with that formation-dasu!” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan lifts up that scythe, the earth scythe, Seeta, high up.

Now that I think about it, she also had that.

Because of that small body of hers, and the special fighting style of using Golems, I didn’t imagine it much but...could it be...Sasae-chan herself is going to be fighting as well?!

The moment I thought this, the biggest Golem that was called by Sasae-chan - also known as ‘Golem Father’ - grabbed Sasae-chan.

“What?! What is going to happen now?!” (Mirack)

The earth scythe, Seeta, that was shouldered by Sasae-chan, was now being held by the Golem.

The scythe was relatively big, but in the hands of the Golem, it looked like a regular-sized scythe.

“This be just the beginning-dasu yo! ‘Golem Mother’ to ‘Vessel Transformation’!” (Sasae)

With those words, the slim Golem that I had severed both arms began to show a surprising change.

The originally slim body was getting slimmer, slimmed with no limits, to a point that it had already lost its humanoid shape and had turned into a different form.

“That looks like...a thread? No, a chain?!” (Celestis)

“I have heard about this before. The transformation ability brought by the Earth divine power. All the solid bodies that are under the rule of the Mother Earth God can be transformed by the earth divine power!” (Mirack)

The Golem that had now transformed into a chain was long and thick. Moreover, those chains were slithering like a dragon or a snake, and bite onto the lower part of the earth scythe.

“Last touch! ‘Golem Boy’!” (Sasae)

On top of that, the last small Golem is connected to the other end of the chain.

With this, the earth scythe Seeta is connected to the small Golem?!

“The formation is completed-dasu yo! ‘Golem Father’! Smash-dasu!” (Sasae)

Obeying the order, the biggest Golem grabs the chains of the scythe with the other hand that was not holding the scythe, and then, because of it, the small Golem was dragged along with the chains.

The small Golem was curled up...like a ball.

And with that...

Bun Bun Bun Bun Bun BunBun BunBun BunBun BunBun BunBun!!

The big Golem uses brute force to swing around the small-sized Golem that was connected to the chain.

Its mass was heavy from the very beginning, so seeing this spectacle from up close had quite the impact.

The wind that was being created by swinging around the chain was hitting our cheeks stubbornly.

“What’s this?! Isn’t this just like a sickle and chain?!” (Mirack)

“Sickle and chain?! What’s with that complicated terminology?!” (Celestis)

I had no leeway to retort to Celestis-chan. If we were to be hit by the giant rock that such a giant is swinging around, we wouldn’t just end up with all our bones broken.

“Ye see this-dasu ka?! By passing mah divine power via the earth scythe Seeta, I transformed the ‘Golem Family’, and strengthened ‘em-dasu! With this power, I will defeat Kuromiya Haine, and accomplish the mission of Mother Earth God-sama-dasu yo!” (Sasae)

Them missing each other has now turned into a big disaster that was threatening to crush us.

Chapter 111: Slaying Giants

“Hey, isn’t this bad?” (Celestis)

Witnessing that big mass swung around at high speed, the voice of Celestis-chan trembles.

Mirack-chan and I remained silent because there was not even the need of agreeing with what she said.

Because of the scientific knowledge that had grown with the ethereal era, we know that liquid is denser than gas, and that solid is denser than liquid.

And the simplest of them all is that, being hit by such a heavy solid object at such high speed will hurt.

The heaviest and sturdiest things in this world are solid. And the one that can freely control those solids is the earth element.

In that sense, from within the earth, water, fire, wind, and light elements; the earth element is the one that possesses the most dreadful of powers.

And we are witnessing that danger right in front of our eyes.

“At any rate, move around! Don’t let it hit you at any cost! If you do, there’s no doubt you will die!!” (Mirack)

With the words of Mirack-chan, we all jumped away as if we were arrows shot from a bow, and dispersed.

Rather than calling it an action out of logic, it was more like a decision out of fear.

“Pointless-dasu! Pointless-dasu! Pointless pointless-dasu!! <Muda Muda Muda!> Now that we are in this formation, we are invincible-dasu!!” (Sasae)

Bun Bun Bun BunBun BunBun BunBun!

The wind that was being created by the chain swung around was like a storm.

That gale and thunderous sound were intensifying the fear inside of us.

“Damn it!! Now that it has come to this, I will hit it with [Flame Burst] to—!!”

(Mirack)

“Don’t! Mirack-chan!!” (Karen)

I stop Mirack-chan who was about to concentrate in using a finishing move.

“‘Flame Burst’ is a destructive technique that burns in a high area of effect! If you use something like that, even Sasae-chan will be burn to crisp!” (Karen)

Sasae-chan is currently at the right arm of the ‘Golem Father’ and was holding the earth scythe together with it.

As if it were an accessory of the Golem.

She has probably become the core of that combination. By pouring earth divine power to the three Golems, she had them transform, and is providing them super strengthened power.

That’s why Sasae-chan can’t take her hands off the scythe when they are in that formation. She herself has become a part of the Golems.

“We have to stop the Golems, but you can’t hurt Sasae-chan no matter what! We have to find a way to destroy the Golems only!” (Karen)

“Is there one?! A convenient method like that!” (Celestis)

We three were yelling around, but no decision was made.

And there’s no way the other side would wait for us to finish our discussion.

“I will be crushing ye-dasu! Go~!” (Sasae)

The counterweight that is turning at fast speed with the chain. The chain was the ‘Golem Mother’ and the counterweight is actually the ‘Golem Boy’.

Calling it a counterweight is cute. With that size, it would be double the size of an adult curled up. If something like that were to hit you, it could easily destroy the body of a human.

With speed that’s plenty enough to consider it a falling rock, it is swung overhead at us.

Gashin!!

A sound that could be mistaken for an earthquake occurred when it crashed

with the ground surface.

That vibration made the Aurora Knights that were looking at it from afar to lose their balance and fall on their rears.

The state of the ground it landed on was dreadful. Earth and stones flew about, and left out remains as if an explosion had occurred.

“I did it-dasu! Smashed-dasu! Did I get them-dasu ka?” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan confirms her victory from the top of the Golem.

From her point of view, it certainly did seem as if we had been hit by the Golem counterweight.

“[Mirage]”

“Eh?! Eeh?! What is going on-dasu ka?! There’s a lot of ye-dasu?!” (Sasae)

That spectacle threw Sasae-chan into confusion.

Well, that’s a given. Mirack-chan, Celestis-chan, and I; all 3 of us had become 6, then 12, then 24, and so on, to the point that it surrounded the Golem.

This illusion is exactly the combined element of Celestis-chan and I.

Combining my light element with her water element, this ‘illusion’ element utilizes the water and light’s refraction to create fake images of ourselves.

What’s surrounding Sasae-chan right now are all illusions with no substance, except for one group.

“What’s with this power?! This be the power of the heroes from the outside-dasu ka?! Ei! I will just crush ‘em all-dasu!” (Sasae)

Obeying the order of Sasae-chan, the Golem swung the chain like crazy, it tried to crush us beginning from the closest image of us, but they all showed no resistance and it all misses.

All hits were onto illusions.

Sasae-chan had completely fallen to our pace now.

“This be unfair-dasu yo! Come out-dasu! Fight fair and square-dasu!” (Sasae)

“Understood, Sasae-chan.” (Karen)

“Ue?!”

By the time she noticed, it was already too late.

The real me had drawn close to her without making any sound, and had already reached the legs of the Golem.

“[Holy Light Edge]!!” (Karen)

With the blade that had been strengthened with the light divine power, I slash it towards the leg of the Golem. With this, I will sever the legs of the Golem and will make it unable to move—!

“Too naive-dasu!” (Sasae)

But my light sword was blocked by the giant scythe.

It is a big scythe that’s hard to control by a human, but for the big body of a Golem, it was a normal-sized scythe. It should be as easy to use as a knife.

I have heard that a sickle and chain is a weapon that uses the centrifugal force to increase the power of the counterweight to throw it far away, and after it is evaded, you enter the range of your opponent and cut it down with the sickle.

This is faithfully serving that purpose.

“Out of options-dasu na. I’ll be smashing ya with the Golem’s big body just like this-dasu!!” (Sasae)

It is true that with my sword being held down, I am in a state where I can’t escape.

But, this is my win.

“Mirack-chan! Celestis-chan!” (Karen)

While she was being distracted by me, the two who had jumped high-up were attacking her from overhead.

“Let’s do it, Celestis! One hit K.O.!” (Mirack)

“You got it! I don’t really like matching my heart with yours though. Combined element, fire and water!” (Celestis)

“”[Steam Explosion]!”” (Celestis+Mirack)

Water evaporated instantly with the heat of fire will expand at an alarming speed.

Becoming the very definition of an explosion.

The Golem that was directly hit by the tip of its nose by it, was luckily unable to endure the explosion and was blown away.

“What-dasuuuu~~?!” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan was also blown away by the shockwave.

In the end, the ‘Golem Father’ had completely lost its head and everything all the way to the shoulders. What was left were both arms, and everything below the stomach.

“All right! How do you like that!” (Celestis)

“With my ability, this was a piece of cake!” (Mirack)

Celestis-chan and Mirack-chan were able to deal a satisfying attack and landed beautifully.

“Uh?! What’s this-dasu? I don’t understand at all-dasu yo!” (Sasae)

And Sasae-chan who was holding onto the right arm of the Golem, was outside the range of the explosion, so she had no injuries, and simply had her eyes going round and round.

What a relief.

“Looks like it is over now. That formation they had was pretty dangerous, but the biggest Golem was the one who served as the main body. Once it is destroyed, it would be like a folding fan that has lost its rivet.” (Mirack)

“It is true that the fighting style of utilizing Golems is strong. But it also told me that you yourself don’t have that much ability. Give up. I will giving you a fitting spanking for all you have made us go through.” (Celestis)

Chapter 112: Earth Puppet

“Uuh~~”

Being surrounded by three heroes, Sasae-chan was trembling like a small animal.

“Kukukuku! What shall I do with you~. You have made such a grand spectacle in the house of someone else after all. In order to turn you into a splendid member of society, we will have to teach you that you have to receive a fitting punishment for everything bad you have done~~.” (Celestis)

“Oi, Celestis. You are making a smile that’s not fitting of an idol.” (Mirack)

Also, what’s that about the house of someone else? This is not your house either though.

“Wait! Celestis-chan, stop it.” (Karen)

“Eeh?”

“No matter the result, I was the one that worsened the situation because of my thoughtless remarks, so everything is my responsibility. That’s why, please don’t blame Sasae-chan!” (Karen)

“Nuu! As expected of Karen. She is the owner of a just and upright heart comparable to that of a Goddess!” (Mirack)

The peanut gallery -Mirack-chan- was being noisy, but for now, I just ignore it.

Anyways, let’s wrap up the situation, shelter Sasae-chan, and ask her about the oracle in detail.

That’s what I thought, but nothing goes as smoothly as one wants.

We thought that Sasae-chan already had no will to resist, but she began to crawl about, and slipped away from between the space of us three.

“Ah?!”

“That girl!” (Mirack)

“Wait a moment there!” (Celestis)

It was a moment of carelessness. She ran towards the legs of the destroyed ‘Golem Father’.

“Still going to struggle pointlessly?! No matter what you do, there’s already no way to win against us!” (Mirack)

“As I thought, you really do want some spanking? Then, I will be keeping you company. I will even throw in an encore as a service!” (Celestis)

The thrill of battle had rekindled inside Mirack-chan and Celestis.

No good. Just when it had begun to wrap up!

“...Don’t go assuming ye won-dasu.” (Sasae)

“Eh?”

“It is not over yet-dasu yo. Not me, and not ‘Golem Father’!” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan touched the giant golem that only had its legs and abdomen left. And then, we could tell with our senses that an incredible amount of earth divine power was poured all at once.

Then...

“What?!” (Mirack)

“What’s that?!” (Celestis)

Along with the voices of surprise of Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan, something surprising occurred.

The earth and stones in the surroundings began to swell on their own, and surge towards the Golem on its own.

And then, after the earth and stones mixed together, it took form, and in the end, it hardened like a rock.

To the shape of the Golem’s upper-half.

“Could it be—?!”

“It has been restored?!”

The ‘Golem Father’ was already no different from the time before it was destroyed by us. It might be fitting to say that it has come back from death.

“Golems can return as many times as they want as long as the Life Block in the middle of ‘em is not destroyed-dasu! They can use the earth and minerals in the surroundings to restore their bodies-dasu! Just because ye have destroyed it once, don’t think ye have won-dasu yo! It is true that I peed a bit because of that big explosion, but only a little bit-dasu!” (Sasae)

The Father that had been restored, picked up the earth scythe Seeta, and swings the chain and counterweight.

We are totally back to where we started.

“Oi, this is...!” (Mirack)

“Yeah, this is bad!” (Celestis)

Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan could tell.

With a development like this, it is practically impossible to win without hurting Sasae-chan.

Until now, we thought that we could calm down the situation by destroying the Golems.

Without hurting Sasae-chan.

That’s why we tried to confuse her with illusions the best as we could, and then, utilized the ‘Steam Explosion’ of Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan while holding back its area of effect as much as possible in order to make it so it doesn’t affect Sasae-chan and just destroys the Golem.

But just as Sasae-chan said, if it is a Golem that can be restored as long as the Life Block is okay, as long as we don’t know where this Life Block is hidden in the Golem’s body, we don’t have any way of defeating it unless we blow its whole body.

If it comes to that, it is close to impossible to capture Sasae-chan without injuring her.

“...Karen.” (Mirack)

The voice of Mirack-chan, that was as if it had been wringed out, must have been a way of saying ‘I will be injuring her slightly’.

If I nod to this, Mirack-chan will most likely aim solely on the Golem's highest weak point that is Sasae-chan to silence the Golem.

I also understand that this is the best method of action.

I am the light hero. Protect the people that are devoted to the Light Church, protect the people that live in Apollon City; I have to make those my priorities.

I have to resolve myself.

Just when I thought this...

“...What is going on?”

In the training ground that had fallen into confusion, a bell-like voice resounded in it.

This voice is...

“Yorishiro-sama?!” (Karen)

The Light Church's Founder, Yorishiro-sama.

If I remember correctly, she was supposed to be in a meeting inside the Grand Church, but it seems the disturbance reached even her.

“Hero Karen, what is the meaning of this? In this dignified Light Grand Church, to allow such a disturbance to occur.” (Yorishiro)

Yorishiro-sama is not talking in the soft tone that she has lately been using to talk to me with, she is using the ‘work mode’ tone she uses when there's the eye of the public.

I can't disturb the order, so I also follow lead.

“I am truly sorry, Founder-sama! But it is dangerous here, so please move back for now! I will be reporting the details of the event once the situation has been resolved!” (Karen)

My real reason is that I don't want to escalate the situation too much, and if Yorishiro-sama gets involved in it, it would definitely escalate the situation. It was an assumption that was practically a certainty.

“That is...” (Yorishiro)

My worries reached deaf ears, Yorishiro-sama ended up noticing.

“...Mantle’s Golems? Why are they here?” (Yorishiro)

As expected of Yorishiro-sama. It looks like she knows of those monsters.

And the peculiar aura emanating from Yorishiro-sama seems to have made Sasae-chan notice her as well.

“Who are ya?! Are ya an ally of the evil God-dasu ka?!” (Sasae)

“Evil God?” (Yorishiro)

“I be the earth hero, Sasae! Under the orders of Mother Earth God-sama, I be here to subjugate the personification of the evil Dark God Entropy, Kuromiya Haine!!” (Sasae)

“.....*What did you say?*” (Yorishiro)

A chill attacked my spine.

Moreover, it seems everyone in the place also felt that chill. Mirack-chan, Celestis-chan, the Light knights, and even Sasae-chan had their face turn ghastly pale.

“...Looks like the Earth Founder and the Mother Earth God are not disciplining their hero properly-desu wa ne.” (Yorishiro)

“Yorishiro-sama.”

At the side of Yorishiro-sama, there’s a girl that nestled close to her like a shadow.

“Please leave it to me.”

“Okay. But don’t overexert yourself. Your body was recently liberated from the shadow, so it still hasn’t regained stability yet.” (Yorishiro)

That person is Doraha, the shadow hero that had returned from the Underworld Country after several centuries.

Chapter 113: The power of the first

A girl with dark skin walks leisurely towards the earth giant.

“Hey, wait a moment! What is that girl doing?!” (Mirack)

“She is not even a hero, so why is she walking forward?! She will get crushed, is that okay?!” (Celestis)

Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan hurriedly tried to stop her, but the two don’t know.

From where she came, for what reasons she is here; I as well don’t know as much compared to Haine-san and Yorishiro-sama though.

The people that know her a little bit call her in this way -the dark hero of the lost Underworld Country, Doraha.

“Let me tell you this in advance.” (Doraha)

Doraha-san, who had approached the Golem to a distance where she could confront it, spoke as if giving her introductory remarks.

“I don’t have any memories. For some reason, I don’t remember anything about the time I was born and what I have done in the past. I was simply taken into custody by Yorishiro-sama when I was wandering about.” (Doraha)

“I-Is that so-dasu ka? Are ya a pitiful person-dasu ka?” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan, who was clinging onto the Golem again, was also confused by this.

“But, even with that, there’s a variety of things I still remember. I haven’t forgotten letters and words, so I am able to have a conversation like this. Also, even if my head has forgotten, my body still remembers. And, most importantly...” (Doraha)

Dorori, I felt like I heard that kind of sound.

For some reason, the surroundings became dark. Even though it is still broad daylight. It was clearly one or two times darker than just a few moments ago.

“I wonder, is there something in this lost memories of mine? When you insulted Entropy-sama just a few moments ago, clear emotions were born inside of me... That divine power you are clad in...that’s the one from the Mother Earth God, Mantle, right? I can tell.” (Doraha)

“What’s with ya-suka? What’s with ya-suka?!” (Sasae)

The peculiar pressure of Doraha-san was shaving away the courage of Sasae-chan.

“Mantle, Coacervate, Nova, Quasar; all of them are lower class Gods. And you who are just a devotee of that religion, what kind of arrogance brought you to think it was okay to insult Entropy-sama?” (Doraha)

“Huh?”

“Huuh?”

Mirack-chan, Celestis-chan, please calm down.

“A fool that doesn’t know her place needs to be disciplined. Have it edged in your body...that Mantle is just a subordinate God under Entropy-sama.” (Doraha)

“No really, what’s with this girl-dasu ka?!” (Sasae)

Of course, Sasae-chan was super angry.

“Suddenly appearing, saying as much as ya want of another’s God! If that be the case, I also have mah own thoughts about it-dasu yo! I’ll be showing ya the greatness of Mother Earth Mantle-sama’s power-dasu!” (Sasae)

BunBun BunBun BunBun BunBun~~!

Once again, the Golem counterweight is swung violently. With that force, it makes me wonder if it could even create a tornado.

The chain and its end were creating many afterimages, and it was already impossible to see which one is the real one.

And that counterweight that was rotating at such high-speed...

Ga Shan!, hit something and was blown back.

“Uhyaaa?! ”

That impact reached the Golem as well, it lost its balance and staggers. Sasae-chan was also doing her best in clinging onto the Golem.

“Eh? What?!” “What occurred?!” “I couldn’t tell well what happened there!”

I couldn’t understand either.

Something flew towards the counterweight while it was rotating, hit the counterweight, and was send flying back. But I couldn’t tell at all what flew, when it hit the counterweight, and how it was send flying back.

In the first place, is that counterweight something that can be send flying back?

Even if it was the smallest Golem of the group, it was still a giant rock. Moreover, it was rotating at high-speeds that were enough to leave afterimages.

“...”

The only one who could have done it is that person.

Doraha-san. Is the person called the shadow hero going to be display her power here?

I didn’t even have the time to think about this, the next surprising thing occurred.

Gangan gan gagagagagan!, the body of the Golem began to break here and there.

“Hiiih?! ‘Golem Father’ is beginning to break in an incredible pace-dasu?!” (Sasae)

What’s being thrown?

Many small things were flying about and hitting the Golem, and were breaking its body.

But just what is it? Is Doraha-san the one throwing them?

“—! Unbelievable!” (Mirack)

Looks like Mirack-chan has noticed something.

“Look! At the legs of that dark skin girl!” (Mirack)

‘The dark skin girl? So it really is Doraha-san doing something?’, is what I thought as I looked at the place Mirack-chan pointed out and strained my eyes to see...

“Eh? Eeeeh?!”

Both of Doraha-san’s legs were moving minutely, moreover, at incredible speed.

It was as if she were tap dancing. It looked as if she were stomping in place, but that wasn’t it.

It is the shadow.

She is kicking her own shadow that’s at the floor.

The shadow that was kicked broke finely like water in a lake surface, and the pieces of shadow that were broken flew like knives and were hitting the Golem, breaking it.

“No way... I didn’t notice at all.” (Karen)

I somewhat knew that Doraha-san could fight by controlling shadows, but to think I wouldn’t notice she was moving her legs so finely and intensely until it was pointed out to me...

“It can’t be helped. That girl, her lower half is doing so much, and yet, her shoulders and head are not shaking at all.” (Celestis)

It is just as Celestis-chan said.

Compared to the lower half that is kicking several tens of shadow pieces by the time you can even count to ten, the upper half of Doraha-san was not quivering at all, just like a sturdy rock.

“...I have heard this of master before. The people that have truly mastered martial arts don’t shake their head up and down even when they walk or run. And from the posture that has been perfected to its ultimate state, they can bring out killer techniques that surpass their actual strength.” (Mirack)

“I dance when I work as an idol, so I can tell. When I have a big performance

where I have to dance, I have to create at least one axis somewhere or it won't become beautiful movements. The movements of that girl, have properly created that axis to the point that it can be called metal reinforced." (Celestis)

The explanation of Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan surprises me in a different meaning.

The two of them have a lot of confidence, and it is rare for them to even praise someone else.

'I am the strongest', these two that believe in this had considered the power of Doraha-san as overwhelming, to the point that they have to acknowledge it.

"Hiiih?! At this rate, I'll just be a pig to the slaughter-dasu! Find victory in a fatal situation-dasu yo!" (Sasae)

And Sasae-chan, who was unable to endure it anymore, tried to counterattack.

It was broken here and there, but even with that, the giant Golem was still able to move plenty well.

With that body, it swings down the super heavy counterweight.

"Be smashed-dasu!" (Sasae)

But that didn't happen.

Doraha-san releases a high-kick that was so high that it felt as if it could reach the skies. A long piece of shadow that was kicked at that moment accurately flew straight to the center of the counterweight like a spear.

"Hiieeee?!"

It must have been a pretty good location to hit.

From the hole that was pierced, cracks ran through, and the counterweight itself was broken to pieces.

"Incredible! In just one hit!" (Karen)

"She must have hit the Life Block." (Yorishiro)

At some point in time, Yorishiro-sama was standing at my side and explained this.

“The Life Block is also called the Golem Core; it is the real body of the earth monster. It is infinitely born from ‘Great Pillar-sama’, and I have heard that they are being utilized in an effective way by the residents of the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze.” (Yorishiro)

“Eh?”

What did she say just now?

“Pulling the earth and minerals in its surroundings, it uses those as materials to form its body. That’s why, even if its body is destroyed, as long as there’s the materials, it can reconstruct itself as many times as it wants, but once its real body -the Life Block-is destroyed, it will just return to being earth.” (Yorishiro)

It is true that the counterweight was one of the three Golems that Sasae-chan had, the ‘Golem Boy’.

“Then, could it be that Doraha-san aimed at that place?” (Karen)

“Must have been.” (Yorishiro)

No way.

It was buried in such a big body, and you can’t tell where it even is. Moreover, the body itself was rotating at high-speed, and yet, she was still able to accurately aim at it and pierce it?

I don’t even understand how she was able to do it.

Underworld Country.

In history, this is the oldest nation founded, and Doraha-san surpassed time and is now here.

In other words, she who has the title of ‘shadow hero’ can be considered the oldest of all heroes in the world.

So this is the power of the first.

Chapter 114: Shadow Skill

“No way~~! To think the Golem Boy bit the dust sooner than his parents-dasu!” (Sasae)

Please don't say it in that way. It pains my heart.

“The small and weak ones die first. It follows the natural order.” (Doraha)

And Doraha-san, please stop saying such dry things!

“...Unforgivable-dasu! Also, this black and evil-looking fighting style, I know now-dasu yo! Yer Kuromiya Haine-dasu na?!” (Sasae)

Saying this, she points at Doraha-san.

“...What are you saying?” (Doraha)

“No need to say more-dasu yo! Evil personification of the Dark God Entropy, yer downfall was you meeting me-dasu! Now that I be here, I will do my best to fulfill the mission Mother Earth God-sama has given to me-dasu yo!!” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan takes a stance with the earth scythe, Seeta.

Reacting to the golden light from the blade, the chain that was attached to the end of it separated, and turns human shaped.

That chain was originally the middle-sized one out of the three Golem.

“!! The two arms that I cut off have also regenerated!” (Karen)

Looks like it is true that as long as the core is safe, they can reconstruct themselves as many times as they want.

“Golem Father, Golem Mother! Parents, Combine!!” (Sasae) <Pick your Power Ranger theme of preference...or a more adult theme, if you know what I mean>

I feel like you said some incredibly troubling words there, Sasae-chan.

Obeying that order, the Golem parents overlapped their body, turned into earth, and mix together. They gather more earth from their feet. They become even bigger than when they mixed together, and become big enough to the point that they might even be grabbing the clouds.

“Mixing two Golems together make it this much bigger?!” (Mirack)

Mirack-chan looks up in surprise.

“Huff, huff~~! H-How’s that-dasu ka?! By injecting earth divine power to dah Golems, it becomes a lot buffer than normal-dasu! Requires a lot of juice-dasu ga... Personification of the evil Dark God, Kuromiya Haine! Give up-dasu yo!” (Sasae)

As I have been saying, that person is Doraha-san, not Haine-san!!

I didn’t even have the leeway to point that out. That supergiant combined Golem, just by stumbling and falling, it feels as if it would destroy the Light Grand Church.

“Personification of darkness...” (Doraha)

“Eh?”

“...I wonder why. Being told that makes me feel slightly nostalgic.” (Doraha)

Even when facing that giant, Doraha-san was not showing a single bit of panic.

That air of composure she has was already turning into a personality trait itself.

“My heart has nothing, it has no past either, the only thing that fulfills me is the benevolence of Yorishiro-sama who picked me up. But even with that, there’s a number of words that stimulate something that I should have lost already.” (Doraha)

...Eh? What?

For some reason, the surroundings have suddenly turned dark. I thought that the sun had been covered by the clouds so I looked up to confirm, but there’s good weather today with no clouds in sight...and yet, it had become dark.

As if changing drastically from fine weather, to cloudy, cloudy to evening; the surroundings were steadily getting darker.

“The *filthy*

four Base Element Gods...those guys are the prime things that stimulate me. Every time I hear their names, inexplicable rage wells up inside of me. If they

are going to go against me, I will happily become the Dark God Entropy, and just as you wish, cut you into a thousand pieces.” (Doraha)

“This is bad!” (Yorishiro)

“Eh?! —Uwa?!” (Karen)

The shout of Yorishiro-sama surprised me as well.

The ground at our feet had been dyed completely black.

The shadow had expanded to the point that it covered the whole ground.

The reason why the surroundings had turned dark was because Doraha-san was absorbing the light from the surroundings.

She was absorbing the light and turning it into the shadow.

“What is this-dasu? Why you so serious— Gyoeeeee?!” (Sasae)

The shadow expanded without limits, and swallowed the giant Golem.

The opponent didn’t have any time to resist. It sunk in one fell swoop from the legs to the chest, and just like that, it was being swallowed.

“Hiiih?! Mah ultimate move Golem is—! In just an instant?!” (Sasae)

The core didn’t matter anymore at this point. It all disappeared entirely without leaving even dust behind.

With this, Sasae-chan is now completely helpless.

“I am...the Dark God Entropy...” (Doraha)

While chanting that phrase, Doraha-san approaches Sasae-chan.

“Save me~~!! *Oba-chaaa~n!!*” (Sasae) <Grandma>

The heart of Sasae-chan broke completely.

This is already at a stage where we can’t just stay as spectators.

“Doraha-san, wait!” (Karen)

I ran and entered in between Doraha-san and Sasae-chan.

My back facing Sasae-chan and my face towards Doraha-san, in a stance of blocking her way.

“Fue?!” (Sasae)

“Doraha-san, the fight has been settled already. Sasae-chan already has no strength to fight back and has no will to oppose anymore!” (Karen)

Or more like, it has already reached the level of definitely being a trauma for her.

“Please forgive her already! Fighting more than it is necessary is not something a hero should do!” (Karen)

But it looks like my voice didn’t reach Doraha-san.

Her face turned even more jet black, and was about to turn into that shadow.

“I am...Dark God Entropy...”

“Okay, that’s as far as you go.” (Yorishiro)

From behind Doraha-san, Yorishiro-sama hugs her.

Her plentiful bosom buries the head of Doraha-san.

“Aw?”

“I have told you before, right? You are still unstable. If you get too stimulated, you can easily get swallowed by the shadow. It looks like I will have to prepare some countermeasures fast.” (Yorishiro)

Being hugged by Yorishiro-sama, the rampage of Doraha-san was stopped surprisingly easily.

Her dangerous expression melted quickly, and the shadow that was covering the ground was also receding.

“Fufu~, as expected of my hero-desu wa ne.” (Yorishiro)

“Eh?”

Being told this, I couldn’t help but get confused.

I think the one that is impressive is Yorishiro-sama though. Being able to stop the rampage of Doraha-san so easily.

“It is as expected of you, being able to jump in an instant to save that small hero-san there in her time of need with no hesitation. You already know that

your powers don't work against Doraha at all, and yet, even with that, you didn't stop." (Yorishiro)

"No, well..." (Karen)

"That action itself is the very proof of your courage. And courage is exactly what makes a hero, that's what makes others call you a hero." (Yorishiro)

Being told that...makes me embarrassed.

"Courage is the purity that is acknowledged by most. It looks like that heart of yours has already reached a single child." (Yorishiro)

"Eh?"

At that time, I suddenly felt a weight at my waist.

When I look down, I saw the figure of Sasae-chan hugging me from behind.

"Ueeee~!! I was scared-dasu~!!!" (Sasae)

Wrapping both of her arms around my waist, she firmly clung onto me. She must have been pretty scared there.

And like this, the Golem turmoil that occurred at Apollon City had been wrapped up.

Chapter 115: Consent to depart

And then...

“I feel as if I just saw a bad dream...” (Mirack)

“Damn right. A hero controlling monsters, that monster being overwhelmed by an unknown girl that is not even a hero; I could hear my common sense falling into pieces.” (Celestis)

Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan; these girls that had completely become spectators in the middle of the battle had also received a shock by that fight.

And then, the other one was...

“Uhm...mah feet are already getting numb-dasu~~!”

The culprit of this time’s incident, the earth hero, Sasae-chan.

And with that as the reason, to show her will to reflect, she is currently doing a seiza on the floor of the parlor room.

“S-Sorry-dasu. Can’t ye please forgive me already-dasu ka?” (Sasae)

“Huh? Of course not, you rampaging hero. For a country bumpkin like you, I have to beat into you that understanding the others is a necessary skill in surviving the city.” (Mirack)

“That’s right. What we are expecting from you is a reflection that is deeper than the sea. Understand that and fix that attitude of yours.” (Celestis)

The two are unrestrainedly strict with Sasae-chan.

“Just saying but, even with this, we are being kind, you know? Or maybe you want to experience the ‘Burning Fall Dogeza’ of the Fire Church to reflect even deeper?” (Mirack)

“The ‘Boiling Water Dogeza’ of the Water Church might also be a good idea. By the time she cries ‘the water is hot, I can’t breathe’, she definitely will have reflected on her actions.” (Celestis)

They are whispering dangerous things to each other?!

“Uhm, you two! Can’t you just leave it at that? It looks like Sasae-chan has already reflected plenty enough!” (Karen)

“Ueeee~! Onee-chan, yer kind-dasu!” (Sasae)

Saying this, Sasae-chan hugged me.

“This girl, looks like she has completely become attached to Karen-chi after she covered for her in that fight. Being all clingy on her.” (Celestis)

“As I thought, let’s go for the ‘Burning Fall Dogeza’. Let’s bake her.” (Mirack)

“Your jealousy is unsightly, fire hero.” (Celestis)

At any rate, it is great that the incident was resolved.

We have also reconciled with Sasae-chan, and it feels as if we have safely returned to a stable state?

“More importantly, what bothers me is...”, is the opinion one other person voices out.

It was the Light Founder, Yorishiro-sama. At her bosom, she is still holding Doraha-san in the between her arms.

It looks like the breasts of Yorishiro-sama have a calming effect on Doraha-san. Even when Doraha-san had rampaged so scarily just a while ago, she is now peacefully sleeping.

“...The movements of the Earth Church. They ordered a subjugation specifically of Haine-san. Just what is Mother Earth Mantle thinking? Karen-san.” (Yorishiro)

“Yes?” (Karen)

“Depending on the details, we might have to attack the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze, so be prepared.” (Yorishiro)

“A war?! No! Never!!” (Karen)

Why is it that Yorishiro-sama, who at times says some slightly scary things, would clearly say scary things when Haine-san is involved?

Well, that’s fine. Right now, there’s other things I want to ask Yorishiro-sama.

“Uhm, Yorishiro-sama...could it be that Haine-san is currently at Ishtar Blaze?”
(Karen)

“Why do you think that?” (Yorishiro)

“The objective of Haine-san this time was the Mother Monsters. To destroy the monsters that give birth to monsters. And the Golems, these existences that are earth monsters, are born from a giant tree in Ishtar Blaze...” (Karen)

Yorishiro-sama said this in the middle of the battle.

“Isn’t that tree itself a Mother Monster? Haine-san went there to defeat it. The reason why Mother Earth Mantle-sama gave out an oracle to defeat Haine-san might be related to that...” (Karen)

“Eeeh?!”

The one who screamed in surprised was Sasae-chan.

“Then, Kuromiya Haine and I had missed each other-dasu ka?! What was the point of mah one month journey?!” (Sasae)

“That is of no importance right now.” (Mirack)

“For now, just shut up.” (Celestis)

The water and fire team pinned down Sasae-chan.

“If that’s the case, what will you do, Karen-san?” (Yorishiro)

Yorishiro-sama asks calmly.

“Haine-san has gone to Ishtar Blaze for the sake of defeating the Mother Monster, and because of that, something unknown is moving. And so, what are you going to do about that?” (Yorishiro)

“I want to go to Ishtar Blaze too.” (Karen)

I answered clearly.

I love Haine-san. Even if I don’t know what to do for the sake of the person I love, I definitely don’t want to do nothing at all.

If by being at the side of Haine-san I can be of use to him, I don’t want to let that chance go away.

“...Fine.” (Yorishiro)

Yorishiro-sama answered clearly as well.

“Just as you have guessed, Haine-san has journeyed to Ishtar Blaze. He didn’t want to drag you into this, so he had me keep silent about it. Sorry about that.” (Yorishiro)

“No well...I did infer that was the case.” (Karen)

“But, it is true that the moves of the Mother Earth God are strange. Karen-san, not only will you be moving as the light hero, I will have you move to Ishtar Blaze under the name of the Light Founder as well. With that much authority in your pockets, the Earth Church shouldn’t be able to act rashly.” (Yorishiro)

“Thank you very much! Ah, but what about the defense of Apollon City?” (Karen)

The first time I gave the proposal of going to Ishtar Blaze, I was rejected because I can’t leave my base.

“Don’t worry. In your absence, we will have this girl do her best.” (Yorishiro)

Saying this, Yorishiro-sama patted the head of the still sleeping Doraha-san.

It is true that I have learned of Doraha-san’s ability to the point that it is indisputable. With Doraha-san, even if I am not here, she would be able to protect Apollon City plenty enough.

That makes me sad as a hero on its own sense though.

“You are the official hero here, so this is a hand I didn’t want to play much, but taking into account the feelings of a maiden in love, I will allow this rule break just this once. Karen-san, please save Haine-san for my sake as well.” (Yorishiro)

Even if there’s a replacement for me, there’s no replacement for Yorishiro-sama.

Yorishiro-sama can’t leave Apollon City.

“Understood. I will properly send Yorishiro-sama’s feelings to Haine-san!”

Yorishiro-sama and I are companions that love Haine-san, we can understand

our feelings.

Then, let's do this immediately.

"Let's go, Sasae-chan!" (Karen)

"Eh? Me too?!" (Sasae)

Of course. We are going to Sasae-chan's homeland, so why wouldn't Sasae-chan go as well?

There were a lot of complications, but I am finally going, to the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze, where Haine-san is.

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Chapter 116: Hero party

A few days later...

“Uwa~~! Big!”

In front of our eyes, a big tree filled our view.

A tree so big that you would need two adjectives to emphasize how big it is.

Even so, it was still far away, and right before our eyes came a mountain range that extends, the big tree was simply peeking out its head from the other side of the mountains.

In other words, that tree was taller and towered over the mountains.

“So that’s the prided giant tree of the Earth Church, Great Pillar-sama!!”
(Karen)

Having the permission of Yorishiro-sama, it took me a few days using my flying machine to fly here. This is my first time going to such a faraway place.

Normally, the heroes of their respective Church have to protect the believers from monsters, so leaving their base is not allowed.

But with the development of the ethereal machines, journeys that take several days become a few hours thanks to the flying machine, and our scope of action has radically expanded, so slight absences have become forgivable now.

Even so, this trip to Ishtar Blaze takes several days even with the flying machine.

In the time I was troubled since something like that wouldn’t be forgiven, thanks to the special consideration of Yorishiro-sama, and Doraha-san who can serve as a guard for the Light capital, I managed to come all the way here.

“Sasae-chan! This is your homeland, right?” (Karen)

“Please spare me-dasu~~! Just kill me already-dasu~~!!” (Sasae)

The reason why Sasae-chan was at the last stages of her sanity was because she had been riding the flying machine until now.

She was holding onto my back, but as expected, the super high-speed of the flying machine seems to be tough on first timers.

The further we go, the more stamina it shaves off Sasae-chan, so we are currently taking a break for her sake.

“To think there be such a fearsome ride, the city be scary-dasu!! The distance that it be taking a month of repeated camping was closed in a few days!!”
(Sasae)

I feel like I am watching the Haine-san I met for the first time.

Haine-san quickly got used to it, but I wonder about this girl.

“Seriously, how pathetic. For a hero to wail at something of this level.”
(Mirack)

“Right? But well, this serves as punishment for rampaging at Apollon City so, isn’t it fine?” (Celestis)

Is what the accompanying Mirack-chan and Celestis-chan say.

...Wait a moment.

“Uhm, I should have asked this sooner but...” (Karen)

“Hm?” (Mirack)

“What?” (Celestis)

“Why are you two tagging along as well?” (Karen)

The fire hero, Mirack-chan; and the water hero, Celestis-chan. These two that are the heroes of other churches should not have any connection to this matter. Moreover, they have to protect their own base, so they shouldn’t be able to travel far thoughtlessly.

The two of them came on their own flying machine that is dyed in the color of their respective church, so if monsters appear in their base, they would take several days in order to return.

“What are you saying, Karen? We are already comrades. No matter where you go, we go together, right?” (Mirack)

“In order to realize my future plans of a worldwide live tour, I was thinking

about checking out the five capitals at least once. It seems like thanks to the kindness of the Light Founder, that shadow girl will be protecting our bases too anyways.” (Celestis) So there was such an arrangement...

Is it really okay to be placing so much weight onto Doraha-san?

It should be okay. She is so strong after all.

“Also, Karen, this time’s matter is not something that the other churches can ignore either, you know?” (Mirack)

“Eh?”

“With this girl rampaging in Apollon City, the special point of the Earth Church has been made public after all. Freely controlling the monsters that are originally our enemies, giving out an order to kill a specific person through an oracle, moreover, that reason is because that person is the personification of the Dark God Entropy...” (Mirack)

“The Dark God’s very existence was dubious, but with this, its existence has now become thicker. Just what is currently occurring in the world. There’s the need for the other churches to grasp it correctly as well.” (Celestis)

And that’s why the dispatch of the fire and water hero was approved?

“Wuuh~~, it feels as if we are the bad guys-dasu.” (Sasae)

“We are going to your base in order to confirm that, aren’t we? Well, don’t worry. We are not the type of people that would rampage around other’s house.

We are not.” (Celestis)

Celestis-chan was persistently bullying Sasae-chan.

But now that I think about it, this is an incredible scene.

Four heroes journeying together; just what are we going to be fighting now?

“But, no matter what we are going to be confirming, Haine-san has already taken the lead and has been investigating, so let’s prioritize regrouping.” (Karen)

“But...”

The one who let out that sunk down voice was Sasae-chan.

“Is that Kuromiya Haine truly a good guy-dasu ka? I just can’t believe it-dasu.”
(Sasae)

From this group of four, the only one who has not met Haine-san in person is Sasae-chan.

The only thing she knows of him is the oracle she received from Mother Earth Mantle, so she is uneasy. Moreover, the subjugation target has entered her homeland.

“It is okay, Sasae-chan.” (Karen)

I gently place a hand on her shoulder.

“Haine-san is stronger, smarter, and kinder than anyone, so Sasae-chan will certainly come to like him.” (Karen)

“The strongest, smartest, and kindest is Karen-nechan-dasu yo,” (Sasae)

Her uneasiness must have been driven out, Sasae-chan hugged me.

“Oh~ Oh~, since being saved at the Light Grand Church, Sasae-chi has been hugging Karen-chi like crazy~.” (Celestis)

“Can I broil that little girl’s face?” (Mirack)

“Don’t get jealous, fire hero.” (Celestis)

Like this, we deepen our friendship as we head towards Ishtar Blaze.

And then, what we saw the moment we arrived at the place was...

Chapter 117: Land of Chaos

What welcomed us the moment we stepped into the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze, were...the screams like those of a battlefield.

“Ruuuun!!”

“Great Pillar-sama –Great Pillar-sama is angered!”

Those kind of screams were echoing all around the city.

The people were running about. The farming tools used for their daily lives and the crops had been thrown away and were rolling tragically around.

“What is this? Just what in the world is going on?!” (Karen) Being welcomed by chaos the moment we arrived, made us fall into confusion.

“This is the daily scenery of this city —is in no way the case, right?” (Celestis)

“Oi, what do you have to say, local girl?” (Mirack)

Mirack-chan asks the one who should know this city the most here, Sasae-chan.

But the Sasae-chan in question was dumbfounded and her mouth was wide open.

“I-I don’t know-dasu! This be the first time I see something like this-dasu!!” (Sasae)

Her face was also pale.

There were a number of residents that noticed her.

“Aaah!! S-S-Sasae-sama!!”

And they run to her as if clinging onto her.

“T-T-This is terrible, Sasae-sama! L-L-Look, Great Pillar-sama has...Great Pillar-sama has has has gotten angry and—! I don’t know what’s going onselfkjsf!!”

The residents seem to be in confusion as well, so we couldn’t get the gist of it.

“W-What should I do-dasu?! In the time I wasn’t at Ishtar Blaze, something

like this—!!” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan trembles along with her words.

“It is okay! I be told it would be okay-dasu! Founder-sama said that Ishtar Blaze doesn’t have many strong monsters, so even if I be gone, the Golems would take care of it, he said! That’s why it wouldn’t be a big deal even if I be gone for a month. He said I can fulfill the oracle without any worries!!” (Sasae)

With Sasae-chan falling into chaos as well, the situation will get more and more uncontrollable.

I hug her tightly in order to calm down her panic.

“Calm down. Right now, you as the hero should be the calmest of all and tackle this. This is the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze. And you are their earth hero.” (Karen)

“Karen-nechan~~!” (Sasae)

“At any rate, let’s go to the center of the disturbance. The people are panicked and are not in a state where they are able to make proper conversation. It is faster to confirm it with our own eyes!” (Karen)

The four of us run.

It was easy to pinpoint the location where the disturbance was occurring. We only had to head to the reverse direction of where the people are running after all.

And we already had an idea of what it was.

There’s only one thing capable of causing such uproar.

“Aah!”

At that place, there was the thing that overturned my common sense waiting.

The giant tree was rampaging.

In my understanding, once trees grow, they don’t move at all, but it seems that’s not the case here.

The roots were moving like an octopus’s tentacles.

While wriggling around, it swung through the ground, air, and all areas it could reach, and was creating abnormal damage.

“That is...the prided giant tree of Ishtar Blaze?!”

“Great Pillar-sama!!”

And just as the rumors state, it was unbelievably big.

That’s why once it rampages, the damage it creates is also unbelievable.

The houses around the city collapsed as the roots pushed out of the ground, and once it is swung down, they are crushed into pieces.

“Aah!! Why, why-dasu ka? Great Pillar-sama, why are ya doing such a horrible thing-dasu ka?! Great Pillar-sama be...Great Pillar-sama be supposed to protect our Earth believers, right?!” (Sasae)

“!! Oi, look! That!!” (Mirack)

It seems Mirack-chan has noticed something. We all observe the place she pointed at.

“That is...! Haine-san?!” (Karen)

From here, it was too far away, so I could only see him like a small grain, but I could clearly tell.

A single human was flying around in mid-air, fighting the roots and branches that were coming from all directions.

At times, he would slip through the storm of roots, and at other times, he would release a pitch-black mass as a shield.

The only one who can do that is Haine-san.

“Haine-san...is fighting the giant tree?” (Karen)

Just what does that mean?

“That guy...did he really do it?!” (Celestis)

“Eh?! What do you mean by that, Celestis-chan?” (Karen)

“He came here to defeat the ‘monster that gives birth to monsters’, the Mother Monsters, right? And the origin of the Golems is that giant tree. There’s

no doubt that thing is the objective of Haine-chi. And so, that giant tree is resisting in that way in order to not be killed, don't you think?" (Celestis)

The conjecture of Celestis-chan was just a conjecture, but it was an incredibly convincing one.

"T-Then—!!" (Sasae)

The voice of Sasae-chan trembled.

This time, it was not because of sadness or panic, it was out of anger.

"Because of him...Ishtar Blaze has fallen into this state-dasu ka? My home... because of him!! As I thought, he really be the personification of an evil God-dasu!!" (Sasae)

Is what Sasae-chan says as she runs off.

It was so sudden that we were unable to hold her down.

"Wait, Sasae-chan!" (Karen)

"Earth hero, Gonbee Sasae!! Will be saving Great Pillar-sama-dasu!! Here I go~~!!" (Sasae)

The earth scythe, Seeta, was raised.

Chapter 118: The reason for the destruction

Why did things turn out this way?

To explain that, I would have to first go back a bit in time.

The next day after I -Kuromiya Haine-arrived at the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze, and had finished my talk with Mantle's 'Fairy'.

* * *

It had been a while since I have used a bow.

In the time when I was helping father in my homeland, this was something I had in my hands almost everyday though. It is a weapon and I thought that maybe I would be using one when fighting monsters, but unexpectedly, it didn't turn out that way.

And so, I pulled the bow I haven't used in a while...and shoot it.

A nice sound of cutting through the air could be heard, and it hit right onto the boar that was laying waste to the tuber field.

They really are everywhere, those guys.

"Ooh, ya did it. Ya hit it-sa ne."

The obaa-san that was at my side clapped her hands.

"That damn hateful boar ya know, was damaging the fields everyday and was troubling me. With the slow legs of the Golem, the most it could do was scare it away after all. Ya helped me out."

"No no, I am happy that I can help out." (Haine)

The Mother Monster, Grandma Wood, that is called Great Pillar-sama by the people...I decided not to destroy it.

With this, I wouldn't have any business with Ishtar Blaze, but I didn't leave immediately and continue staying here.

Today, I once again met with the Obaa-san that had guided me in my time here, and after hearing the talk about 'a boar is damaging my fields and it is

troubling me', my hunter blood grew restless.

Just by not touching a bow for one day, my skills degrade quite a lot, so I was uneasy in whether I could actually hit it though. I am glad that the other party this time had its guard down. It looks like it didn't expect an arrow to be shot.

"But this is unexpected. If you have a farm as big as this, it shouldn't be strange to have a hunting organization of sorts." (Haine)

"Something like that had died out around a decade ago, ya know. Thanks to the Golems appearing, everything became convenient, ya see. Many things became 'something that people shouldn't put so much effort in'."

While we were talking, the Golem headed to where the boar is to retrieve it. It is because it received that order.

We just have to wait for it to return.

"Building a house, plowing the field, defeating enemies; it has now all become asking the Golems. Without those kids, our livelihood wouldn't even be able to stand on its own for a single day. This may sound weird coming from someone that has been taken care of by them a lot but, at times, it makes me scared."

The Obaa-san says this as she lets her weight rest onto her cane.

"Visitor-san, did ya know? The fighting organization that the Earth Church uses in conflicts is called a scary name like Scorched Earth Annihilation corps. Several centuries ago, they be just as the name states. They be as tough and strong as a rock, and at the places they pass through, not a single blade of grass is left. They were feared by the other Churches. But now, they be good young lads that use their work time to harvest Blocks from Great Pillar-sama."

"Isn't that nice? Rather than scary, it is a lot better to have them being kind." (Haine)

"You thinking that way makes ya kind in itself."

Saying this, the Obaa-san giggles.

"...But well, yeah. I been saved by those kids quite a lot too, and that has allowed me to live 'till I be this old. Complaining would be uncouth. Seriously, as age piles up, mah mouth gets looser."

This land was good for my skin.

In the first place, I, as the human Kuromiya Haine, grew up at a village in the deep mountains. This Ishtar Blaze that has Golems as their foundation of living and the Ethereal culture has not developed much has a close atmosphere to that of my homeland, that's why, even when I understood that I have no business here anymore, I just can't make my legs move.

As I stay here, it makes me wonder, what's truly good for humans?

The humans were imprisoned in the ruling of the Gods for several centuries, and the trigger that made them break out of that yoke was a new material called Ethereal that brought upon the machine culture. The convenience the machines provided dimmed the need for Gods and the people became free.

I also moved from my land of birth to Apollon City, and have been bathed by the ethereal culture plenty. However, now when I return to a life without machines, I felt like I was remembering something I had forgotten.

Could it be that this peace of mind I am feeling now is because I am a country bumpkin at core?

At any rate, the more I thought about these thoughts that I wouldn't normally think, the more I felt as if the Mother Earth God had gotten me good.

* * *

At evening, I returned to the Grand Crimson Palace of the Earth country.

It is the headquarters of the Earth Church, and a nice place that provides lodging for the travellers that arrive here every now and then.

"Hey there, Haine-san. How was the hunt?"

Just like yesterday, the Earth Founder himself received me.

However, his behaviour felt somewhat distant.

"It is only evening, and I was already able to bring down 4. The beast management is pretty negligent around here." (Haine)

"That's just how troubled we were about it. It is embarrassing. But thanks to you, I feel like this season we will have an increase in harvest."

Please don't praise me that much.

"But it would be bad to stay for too long, so I was thinking about leaving by tomorrow. I have truly been under the care of the people of the Earth Church."
(Haine)

"No no no no!"

The Earth Founder suddenly got agitated. He even bended back. Just what was so shocking about that?

"Well, no need to say that. How about staying here for a while more? Haine-san's hunting skills are important for Ishtar Blaze after all!"

"No but...I would feel bad if I were to monopolize the guest room for too long." (Haine)

"In that case, how about we do this? How about we build a house for you in this land?"

Eh?

No way. Building a house for a mere traveller, isn't that way too much no matter the case?

"No need to worry. Building a house in Ishtar Blaze is an incredibly easy task."

"You are going to have the Golems build it?" (Haine)

"No, the Golems will become your house."

"?"

"Golems not only work hard, they also possess a special characteristic. By pouring Earth divine power, we can freely change their composition and form. If we write an order like 'become a house' and have it absorb plenty enough divine power, the house-shaped Golem will be made in no time."

Are Golems really that convenient?!

"This Grand Crimson Palace itself is made out of several Golems. It could even be called a Golem Palace. It is normally just a normal building though. But once I -as the user-were to give an order...I can change its form freely to a certain degree. Just like this!"

The Earth Founder snaps his fingers.

And then, the walls in both sides swelled up, that swelled up part took human form, and then separated from the wall.

Golems.

They are small Golems that can fit the inside of the room, but there were several of them.

They were coming out from the walls in the literal sense of the word.

I see. This certainly is something incredible, but why is the Earth Founder going through the trouble of putting up such a show?

It is true that a picture is worth a thousand words, but even so, this number of Golems, isn't it going a bit too far?

Moreover, all the Golems had forms like hammers and stakes at their arm part, and it was clear that they were planning on destroying something.

...No, maybe kill?

"...Founder, what is the meaning of this?" (Haine)

Just in case, I try asking. But at that moment, the distant feeling that the Founder had disappeared.

"I already had the people cleared out from the room and its surroundings. To think that you and our hero would miss each other and you would be invading our land. It was truly unexpected. As expected of the personification of the Dark God."

"?!!"

I was surprised by those words, and at the same time, several things fell in place. It was hard to accept though.

"Now that it has come to this, the oracle I received from Mother Earth Mantle-sama will be fulfilled by me! Personification of the evil Dark God, Kuromiya Haine! Know that you won't be leaving Ishtar Blaze alive!"

Chapter 119: Confession

Several Golems appeared!

My attacks wiped out the Golems.

“Now then...” (Haine)

Well, in the face of my dark matter, elements are powerless after all.

It would be pitiful not to even leave dust behind, so I left them with things like arms and legs, but maybe because they have lost their Life Blocks, they slowly turned to earth and scattered on the room.

“Hiiih?! Ueee?!”

The Earth Founder who had seen the whole fight unfold right before his eyes let out a scream out of surprise or maybe fear, then, his legs lost strength and he fell onto the floor, unable to move.

“Well then, Founder-dono, you will be explaining, right? The reason for this violence.” (Haine)

“W-W-W-What unreal power! S-S-S-So you really are just like the oracle of Mother Earth God-sama said, the personification of the evil Dark God!”

“Wa?”

He knows my identity?

Moreover, an oracle of the Mother Earth God?!

“What is the meaning of this, Mantle?!” (Haine)

I made this shout directed at the sky, but the change occurred at my feet.

At some point in time, one root had entered from the window of the building, and squirmed its way to my feet.

I was wondering what was going on, so I looked at the Earth Founder, but he shook his head to the sides with incredible force.

Looks like this was not done by him.

In that case, who—without giving me the chance to think, something began to swell up from the root. A flower bud blossomed right before my eyes, and from inside it, appeared a fluorescent being.

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry~~!!!”

“Gyaaaaa! She came out!!”

Just as usual, a barrage of apologies came flying out and it was as if she were trying to crush me.

It is okay to apologize, but don’t go clinging onto me at the same time. Not with that voluptuous body of yours.

A woman that can kill people with her apologies...Mother Earth Mantle enters the stage.

Originally, a God has no physical form, and as she doesn’t have a flesh vessel like me who had incarnated, whenever she had business in the surface world, she would create a temporary body from the closest plant which is called ‘Fairy’, and with that, she communicates.

“I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry, I’m sorry~~!!!”

“Can’t you appear without apologizing?! At any rate, calm down! What I want is not an apology, but an explanation!” (Haine)

Anyways, I expended quite the physical and mental strength to have her calm down from all that apologizing.

...And then...summarizing what she told me, this is apparently what’s going on.

Mantle had given an oracle to the Earth Church that revered her. Stating to ‘kill the personification of the evil Dark God Entropy, Kuromiya Haine’.

In other words, me.

The Earth Founder that received this oracle gave out a subjugation order to the earth hero, albeit reluctantly, and had her head to the place where I was, Apollon City.

No wonder the hero that normally appears the moment I arrive at their territory didn't show a single shadow of appearing this time.

To think we would miss each other as she was aiming for me.

Then it is a given that the Founder who gave the order would be panicked.

And so, the first thing I thought about after understanding the situation was...

"Why did you give out such an oracle?" (Haine)

The 'Fairy' of Mother Earth Mantle was currently prostrating with that uselessly big body of hers. She is prostrating, and yet, her line of sight is not that different from me who is standing.

".....I'm sorry." (Mantle)

"Explanation! What I want from you is not an apology, but an explanation!! Did you not pick that up?!" (Haine)

I pursue the issue slightly snapped. Mantle's shoulders quivered in surprise.

No good. With one push more, she will cry.

But now that my life has been targeted, I can't leave the matter in a hazy state.

"Could it be that the reason why you were apologizing really hard the other time was because of this?" (Haine)

"..... *tear*"

Finally crying.

Really, so hard to deal with her. From within the other five Gods, she is one of the most difficult to deal with.

".....Coacervate-san was..." (Mantle)

"Hm?"

Coacervate?

The Water God Coacervate?

"He suddenly came to my place and...told me that Entropy-san has come back, so we have to do something fast. That we would be destroyed at this

rate!” (Mantle)

So the usual schemer behind the scenes was him huh.

Coacervate is the type that likes to make his plans in the shadows after all.

Moreover, just a while ago, I crushed the conspiracies that he was trying to stir in Hydra Ville, so it must have pissed him off quite a bit.

“‘The weakness of Entropy-san is that he dotes on humans, so if we were to have the humans go against him, it would trouble him quite a lot’, he said! That’s why he told me to give out that oracle!” (Mantle)

“The story makes sense but...why is it that Coacervate had you do that?” (Mantle)

That guy has the Water Church that follows him, so I thought that it should be fine to just utilize his own hero, but in the middle of thinking that, I soon understood.

For a wannabe-schemer like him, he would never dirty his own hands. He would use the hands of others and enjoy tricking them; that’s the kind of trash he is.

He broke that pattern of his not that long ago and was defeated by me, so he must have reflected on it and hid even more in the shadows.

If he is not going to be dirtying his own hands, he just has to use the hands of others, but...since the matter of the Underworld Country, the Light Goddess Inflation has been in a position that is close to antagonistic towards them.

The one who has the closest ideology -the Fire God Nova-is currently imprisoned, and the Wind God Quasar, no matter how much he tries to find him, that Wind God is a guy that he wouldn’t be able to catch.

In that case, the only one he can utilize is this Mother Earth Mantle. Her personality also screams ‘please use me’ after all.

“...That’s why, in the end, I couldn’t refuse. I’m sorry, I’m sorry...” (Mantle)

Is what the ‘Fairy’ of Mantle says as she still cried.

“...If that’s the case, I can’t blame you for it.” (Haine)

“Fue?”

“I have been saying it over and over but, it is fine for you to hold more confidence. You are properly thinking about the humans as you act as a God after all. And in terms of your power, you don’t fall behind them. No, you might even be stronger. Thanks to the Golems, you should have obtained a lot more prayers from the people after all.” (Haine)

That’s why, even if Coacervate says something to her, she can just reject him if she doesn’t like it. She has that much amount of power after all.

“—Fueeeeeee!! Entropy-san is kind as I thought~~!!” (Mantle)

“Don’t cry anymore. I am already not angry.” (Haine)

But this girl, why is it that even when she is a God, she is this fragile?

Was she like this 1,600 years ago too?

“...Thank you very much. Thanks to Entropy-san, confidence is surging up inside of me! I have never felt this refreshed in centuries!” (Mantle)

“Hm?”

“If it’s now, I feel like I will be able to do anything. As I thought, I really will put it into motion. What I have been thinking about for a long time ago; the plan to provide ultimate happiness to the people!!” (Mantle)

Chapter 120: Absolute happiness

What is this woman suddenly saying?

Ultimate happiness plan?

“Grandma Wood actually has a second form. The first form is the state where it gives birth to Life Blocks as a Mother Monster. But I didn’t want this child to stay as just that. I couldn’t truly agree in the plan of Coacervate-san and the others regarding the propagation of monsters, so...” (Mantle)

Her way of talking is pretty forward for Mantle.

Does that mean my encouragement affected her that much?

“That’s why I added another function to this child.” (Mantle)

Saying this, the ‘Fairy’ of Mantle patted the root of Grandma Wood that had infiltrated the room.

“It doesn’t rely on other Gods. A plan that I myself made that will make possible the ideal coexistence between Gods and humans; a ground-breaking function. But until now, I haven’t released it. If I were to release it, Nova-san and Coacervate-san would definitely get angry after all. But there’s no need to worry about something like that, right?!” (Mantle)

The Fairy of Mantle shows me a glittering smile.

“Thanks to Entropy-san, I have obtained courage! I am thinking about providing the absolute happiness that I have thought of. And then, I will also be able to obtain happiness as a God as well. Everyone will obtain happiness! Is there anything as good as this?! No, there’s not! That is exactly the duty of I, Mother Earth Mantle!!” (Mantle)

“Uhm, Mantle-san?” (Haine)

The sudden high-tension Mantle made me pull-back a bit.

“Oooh~, M-Mother Earth God-sama?!”

At my side, a voice filled with confusion and expectation rang.

“Are you Mother Earth God Mantle—sama?!”

The Earth Founder.

Now that I think about it, I completely forgot that this guy was here too.

This old man that has already passed the fifty years old placed both of his hands in prayer towards the fluorescent Mantle, and his whole body was shaking.

Well, the God that he has been worshipping his whole life has appeared right in front of him after all.

I can understand how he is trembling in happiness at this.

“That’s right. I know of you. You are the 59th Founder-san of the Earth Church that worships me, right?” (Mantle)

“Oooh~~! Mother Earth God-sama, I am humbled!!”

The Earth Founder was literally falling into ecstasy religiously.

But is this really okay? For a God to show its figure so easily, wouldn’t that create problems in the future?

“Sorry but, please let me take back the oracle I gave out before. The Dark God Entropy-san is the one that loves the humans the most within the six Gods. I was pushed by the self-interest of the other Gods, and was forced to cooperate in a plot to create discord between Entropy-san and the humans, which is a regretful action of mine.” (Mantle)

“No way! Please don’t blame yourself, Mother Earth God-sama! Understood. I will forget that last oracle. I will also immediately call back the hero that was dispatched!”

I feel like with this all the problems have been resolved, but...

“Thank you very much. Well then, now all that’s left is proceeding with the plan with peace of mind. My plan to make you and all the people that believe in me...realize absolute and flawless happiness.” (Mantle)

“Mother Earth God-sama! I am honored. Just by being able to have an audience with you in the time I was alive is already plenty enough happiness—

Hiiiiih?!!!"

At that moment, the Earth Founder noticed the abnormality that was occurring on his own body.

It is the root.

The Root that had invaded this room and had bloomed the Fairy of Mantle had at some point in time wrapped around the legs of the Earth Founder.

First of all, there's no doubt that this root is connected to the giant tree, Grandma Wood.

The root wrapped around him didn't stop at its feet and even wrapped around his whole body, like a serpent capturing its prey.

"M-Mother Earth God-sama?! This is?! What is the meaning of this?!"

"I will be bringing all of you happiness. I will bring you all incomparable happiness." (Mantle)

The root didn't stop at wrapping around the Founder, things that looked like branches began to grow from the root, and they began to slip into the skin of the Founder, and then, began to assimilate him.

"Mother Earth God-sama?! Mother Earth God-saaaaa!!!"

The Founder shouted as if going crazy, but it didn't take long for him to become silent.

The moment he was assimilated by the root, his eyes lost light, and his limbs lost strength. As if his very heart has been absorbed.

"Oi, don't tell me he died? Did you kill him?!" (Haine)

"No, he is alive." (Mantle)

Mantle responded to my surprise and panic in a calm manner.

"The unnecessary functions of his body were simply cut off. By being assimilated to Grandma Wood, he will be provided the necessary nourishment by the tree. There's already no need for them to intake nourishment, and no need to do the work like plowing the field and harvesting crops for the sake of that. They also won't have to fight against the foreign enemies that try to rob

them of it. That's why, there's already no need to think." (Mantle)

"You—!!" (Haine)

The words that Mantle said not that long ago had resurfaced in my head.

Ultimate happiness.

Are you telling me this is what she meant?

"This is the second form of Grandma Wood. It assimilates humans infinitely, and provides them nourishment. Thanks to this, people will be able to live without working. No need to fight, no need to worry; all the troublesome things that need to be done to survive, it is okay not to do them at all. Isn't this the ultimate happiness!!" (Mantle)

At the outside of the room, I heard a piercing thunderous sound.

Moreover, from all directions, several times. From within all that, I could hear the faint screams of people as well.

"Could it be—?!" (Haine)

I ran out the room and check the state outside.

At the state of Ishtar Blaze.

At that place, it had already turned into the pinnacle of panic.

The roots of Grandma Wood that had been unmoving until now had suddenly begun wriggling like a living being and were bringing chaos to the city.

Mowing down buildings, turning around the ground; the branches that were coming out from the roots were capturing all the people and were assimilating them.

Just like the Founder.

"—Stop it!!" (Haine)

I finally was unable to continue watching and jumped out.

I released dark matter at whatever place necessary and destroyed the roots from the closest ones I could reach, but it didn't progress as I wanted.

The roots had already assimilated the people, and if I were to put the dark

matter to its strongest output, there's an incredibly high chance that I might even injure those people as well.

"Mantle!! Stop right this instant!! Release the people!!" (Haine)

"Why? I am doing something good." (Mantle)

At some point in time, Mantle's Fairy was floating in front of me.

"Everyone will be happy, you know? Me, and the humans too. For a long time now, I have been dreaming of the world becoming like this." (Mantle)

Chapter 121: True Utopia

“Impossible! You four Base Elements can’t maintain yourselves unless you receive prayers from humans, right?!” (Haine)

I heard that from Yorishiro.

For the Gods, the prayers of humans should be a sweet poison. They drunk that delicacy to the point of drowning, fattened themselves with it, and not only that, they ended up unable to live without the prayers of humans.

Mother Earth Mantle is one of the four Base Elements.

If she steals the consciousness of people and makes them unable to pray, it would mean her doom.

“No need to worry, Entropy-san.” (Mantle)

Mantle answers calmly.

It feels as if she is a completely different person from the woman that was crying ‘I’m sorry’ just a moment ago.

“Grandma Wood’s second form doesn’t have such a poor making. It can assimilate humans and provide them with nourishment, along with absorbing the soul energy that is pretty similar to that of the prayer energy. We will be presenting each other with the things we both want. If I remember correctly, this is called a ‘mutualism’, right?” (Mantle)

“What are you even talking about?!” (Haine)

Mantle may call it the ultimate happiness, but there’s no way that’s the case!

Stealing the freedom of thought from the humans and leaving them in this state where they are simply alive, there’s no way that’s happiness!

“Entropy-san, I hate conflicts.” (Mantle)

“ ... ”

“That has been the case even 1,600 years ago. The moment the Gods began fighting, I was simply scared. I thought: ‘who cares about humans, I just want

the fight to be over’.” (Mantle)

Mantle wished for the fast ending of the battle, and took the side of the five Gods that had the advantage. I myself faintly understood this fact.

“But it is not as if I hate humans. They are intelligent, peaceful, and they respect a God like me. But even them, when there’s a clash in opinions, they soon enter into disputes as well. Why do people and Gods fight? That’s why I thought of this; the best way to live without conflicts.” (Mantle)

“And that is to turn humans into living corpses?!” (Haine)

“Eternal eradication of conflicts. That’s exactly the ultimate happiness! Even so, the violent Nova-san and the evil Coacervate-san would be against it and get angry, so I couldn’t find the chance to put it into practice. I...had no courage.” (Mantle)

‘But...’, is what Mantle says as she continues.

“That courage...you gave it to me, Entropy-san. You praised me for the first time! You agreed with me! That’s why I was able to hold my head high and challenge this great enterprise! I will have Grandma Wood swallow all the people that worship me, and bring them into a dream world where no conflict exists!!” (Mantle) <God damn it, Madara. So this is where you ended up!>

It is my fault?!

Did a weird switch get flipped because I told her words that are normally not told to her?!

While we were doing this, the giant tree had its roots wriggle without restraint and was capturing people one after the other. Moreover, the enemy of the people were not only Grandma Wood.

“The Golems are—!!”

“The Golems are attacking us! Everyone, get away!!”

The Earth monsters that were born from Grandma Wood, Golems.

They were originally exceptions from the monsters that attacked humans; they helped out in the livelihood of humans, and lived alongside humans. It was as if they were the friends of humans, but now, Golems have betrayed humans.

They take advantage of their big frame to grab the closest person to it, and give them to the roots of Grandma Wood.

The Golems that have been born from the earth Mother Monster are clearly the dependents of the Mother Earth God. The authority rights are higher for the God than the people.

Obeying the will of Mantle, the Golems transport the people to Grandma Wood as if they were harvesting humans. Also, as if saying they won't be letting the people at the houses out, the door are being tightly closed.

Now that I think about it, I was told that the houses in this city are made from transformed Golems.

They are trapping the people inside until the root visits them.

Their lifestyle that relied heavily on Golems was proving to be their downfall at this moment.

"Now then, let's all go together to the dream world. There, in exchange of receiving your soul energy, I will provide you all with unending happiness."
(Mantle)

That unending happiness you are talking about is a sleep that they won't be waking up from!

Dark Matter gushes out from my hands.

"I will protect this place. In the meantime, hurry and run!" (Haine)

The words I said made the people of Ishtar Blaze dumbfounded for a second, but because of the fear of danger, they soon began running away.

"What's wrong, Entropy-san? If you do that, my work will be hindered."
(Mantle)

"Obviously. I plan on getting in the way, after all." (Haine)

It looks like the Fairy Mantle couldn't understand those words of mine.

"I was careless. In the end, you four Base Elements all have a loose screw somewhere huh." (Haine)

"What are you saying? Didn't you...praise me?" (Mantle)

“And I am saying that was a mistake! Mother Earth God, Mantle! I will destroy that screwed up ideal of yours along with that giant tree!!” (Haine)

My dark matter is released.

This dark matter that holds a complete advantage against the fire, water, wind, and earth, is plenty effective against the earth Mother Monster, Grandma Wood.

But it wasn't an effective method.

Grandma Wood had already assimilated several hundreds of people.

Even if I were to destroy it with dark matter in that state, it is absolutely impossible to achieve that without hurting the people.

I naturally couldn't go into the desired offensive and ended up fighting a defensive battle.

Creating a wall with dark matter, it took my all to make sure the roots wouldn't get close to the people, but my opponent is that giant tree. It can easily go around the defense line I created, and it can attack the people from anywhere.

At this rate, the situation will just gradually worsen.

I have to make a drastic countermeasure... is what I was thinking when...

“?!!! Owa?!”

I suddenly felt killing intent from my back, and an instant after I twisted my body, the blade of a giant scythe passed by there, at the place where I was before.

That was dangerous.

If I hadn't avoided that instantly, I would have been cut in two.

The one who swung the giant scythe was a small girl.

It is the first time I have seen this girl.

I have not seen her once in my time at Ishtar Blaze. Just who is she?

“Earth hero, Gonbee Sasae!! I'll be saving Great Pillar-sama-dasu!! Let's

gooo!!”

Chapter 122: Too much for a hero

The hero appears at this timing?

From the looks of this small girl that called herself Gonbee Sasae, I assume she is around 12-13 years old. She is younger than any other hero I have met, and with that, makes her look less reliable than the others as well.

But I couldn't lower my guard.

Her eyes are devoid of light after all.

"I won't forgive you-dasu! How dare ya do this to Ishtar Blaze!!" (Sasae)

No wait. Could it be that this girl is thinking this chaos is my fault?

"So you really were the personification of the evil Dark God-dasu na! Now that it come to this, I be executing my original objective-dasu! Golem Father, Golem Mother, Golem Boy!!!" (Sasae)

Without even finishing speaking, this Sasae-chan girl began attacking me.

The giant scythe was named Seeta, and it is most likely the divine weapon that represents the Earth Church.

Compared to the ones from the heroes I have seen, this one is on a whole other level of big, and the blade that has earth divine power flowing from it was dangerous enough to cut iron with it, but it wasn't that much of a threat.

She is able to utilize the giant scythe to a certain degree, but her wide moves were making it easy to predict and easy to evade.

Her skill level is lacking compared to the other heroes, which is fitting for her age, even so, it is currently troublesome.

Because on the other side, Grandma Wood continued capturing humans, and in the time I am being troubled with Sasae-chan, the number of people caught increases drastically.

Even so, she may be having a misunderstanding here. She is angered by her homeland being hurt.

I can't just inconsiderately knock her out...

"Don't run around-dasu! Get cut in half to calm down Great Pillar-sama-dasu!!" (Sasae)

"Wait, *you*

calm down! Even if you defeat me, Grandma Wood won't stop!" (Haine)

Even when I tried to appease her, Sasae-chan was not lending me an ear at all.

"Just get defeated already-dasu! Giant Scythe Boomerang!" (Sasae)

She was probably trying to throw that giant scythe and treat it as a boomerang. But...

"Oh oa..." (Sasae)

It is a giant weapon that surpasses her height by a lot. The moment she tried to throw it, she lost balance, and the giant scythe spins rapidly at an unknown direction.

"Aaah, I messed up-dasu!!" (Sasae)

"?! Oi, wait!!" (Haine)

At the place where the giant scythe was flying to, there's a root of Grandma Wood. At its surface, it had already assimilated several tens of people.

If the scythe were to hit someone there—!!

"[Dark Matter, Set]!" (Haine)

I set up the Dark Matter at my hands to repulsion and fly with the recoil of it. At a speed that can catch up to that giant scythe.

"Guaaaa!"

Using myself as a bullet and hitting it with my body, I managed to strike the giant scythe before it reached the root.

But...

"Guh!!"

The intense pain running at my abdomen.

It probably hit the edge of the giant scythe; I could see a cut that ran straight through my side.

Well, I did a body blow against a big blade like that, so I should consider myself lucky that I wasn't cut in half.

"I did it-dasu! He be an idiot that went himself to get hit-dasu! This be my chance! I'll give the finishing blow-dasu!!" (Sasae)

Picking up the fallen giant scythe, Sasae-chan approaches me.

However, because of the pain in my body, I couldn't stand up properly.

This is bad.

Before the giant scythe fell onto my neck—

"You IDIOT!!!"

"Ugyaaaa-su!!" (Sasae)

A big water current hit Sasae-chan and was washed away by the overwhelming water pressure.

Could this be—?!

"In Apollon City you were an incredible pain because of a misunderstanding, and yet, even here, you are rampaging with that same pattern?! What was the point of your reflection?!"

"Celestis?!" (Haine)

Why is the water hero here?!

"Long time no see~. That big wound makes you look really manly. Wait for a bit. I will close your wound by adjusting your body fluids." (Celestis)

Saying this, she places Miki-Moses on my open wound, and then, my wound was closing at a visible speed that wouldn't be possible with natural healing.

It can't be called fully healed, but as expected of the Water element that possesses the most practical use out of all the elements.

"...No no, why are you here?!" (Haine)

"It is not only me. See?" (Celestis)

Is what Celestis says as she points at a direction, and I follow it.

“[Holy Light Blade]!”

“[Flame Hurricane]!”

A flash occurs from afar and fire roars.

That is without doubt...

“...Karen-san and Mirack?” (Haine)

“O’ yes.” (Celestis)

Celestis affirmed it.

“The two of them quickly judged what the situation was and went their ways. They are currently fighting to protect the residents from those roots, and are evacuating the people. The only one who plunged into the day after tomorrow without grasping the situation was you, local hero.” (Celestis)

Is what Celestis said as she grinded her fists at the temples of Sasae-chan.

“But because of my elemental affinity, I can’t fight straight on against those roots, so I got send here though. How to say it, baby-sitting the rampaging girl.” (Celestis)

Ah.

The other side is earth element after all. It would be tough for the water element Celestis.

“But why are four heroes together? What happened to the protection of your bases?” (Haine)

“About that, I want to tell you about it together with all the events that have occurred till now, but you also understand that this is not the time for that, right? I am the one who wants to do the questions here. Just what is going on, and what is it that we should be doing. Quickly tell me in detail and in a concise way; say it fast and make it easy to listen to!” (Celestis)

Don’t ask for the impossible.

Chapter 123: Decision of the hero

“Ultimate happiness?!”

That woman’s plan...for now, I decided on leaving it as the plan of that giant tree. Putting it in a concise phrase, it would be ‘ultimate happiness’. Hearing this, Celestis and Sasae-chan froze.

Can’t be helped. It can’t be understood after all.

“The problem about this is that it doesn’t have a single shred of malicious intent about it. It is all out of goodwill. It is just that it decided this is okay for the sake of humans when it decided to take this violent action.” (Haine)

Assimilating the humans into the tree, it provides them with nourishment from inside it. In exchange, it will absorb soul energy from the tree and make them its foundation to live.

The assimilated humans will most likely be able to live forever inside the tree.

There’s no need to fight foreign enemies to protect themselves, no need to work in order to maintain themselves to live. And along with that, they won’t require to think, and won’t need emotions either.

You will be able to sleep inside the tree forever.

For it, even that is out of goodwill. It is trying to take away all the troublesome things required to live.

“What’s with that?! Don’t joke around!!” (Celestis)

Taking out the parts about me and Mantle from the explanation, the first one to straight out object was Celestis.

“You saying that just by living you will be happy?! Humans can feel happiness exactly because they think and feel, right?! Don’t go putting us on the same level as plants just growing on the ground!” (Celestis)

The anger of Celestis surpassed my expectations.

She is the hero that held doubts towards being fully devoted to being a hero and entered the bizarre route of being an idol hero.

She definitely would object more than anyone else about that logic of having their free will taken away and considering existence as 'happiness'.

"Rascals, did you hear that?!" (Celestis)

"Yeah, the reception here is favorable."

"It is hard to believe, but if Haine-san said it, there's no mistake."

?!

I heard the voice of Mirack and Karen-san, who are not supposed to be here.

"What are you getting all scared for? We are keeping in contact with the ethereal sound transmission device." (Celestis)

There's something as convenient as that?!

True, now that I look carefully, there's something at the ears of Celestis?!

"The Ethereal sound transmission development is the most advanced at my Hydra Ville! At any rate, I put one vote on kicking the ass of that tree! If they stay sleeping, they won't be able to hear my singing and they won't be able to see my dancing either!" (Celestis)

"I also agree. Like hell I would let a damn tree decide the happiness of humans!" (Mirack)

"I also..." (Karen)

The voice of Karen-san, that can be heard from the wireless device, made a small pause and finally says this.

"I can't accept the opinion of that tree. Humans have the right to at least think about what is it that makes them happy. What that tree is doing is a breach to that right. Once hit, opposing is a legitimate right that we have as well!!" (Karen)

As expected of heroes. Their decision making is refreshingly fast.

And within that group, only one hero was maintaining silence.

"What will you be doing, Sasae-chi?" (Celestis)

Celestis slaps the shoulders of Sasae-chan.

“This is the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze. ‘Protect this place’, in reality, you as the earth hero should have been the first one to declare that will of yours, you know.” (Celestis)

“I...I—!!” (Sasae)

It isn’t that simple of a matter.

It is exactly because this is her homeland and she knows deeply about the people here that it is making her decision difficult.

The giant tree that is currently rampaging, just how much was it loved by the residents here? Just how unbelievable that betrayal is? It is exactly because she knows about it, that her feet are heavier.

Moreover, she is the youngest out of the current heroes. It would be fitting to call her childish. For such a Sasae-chan, this was a harsh choice.

“Uhm, what happened to Earth Founder-sama...” (Sasae)

“He was the first one to get caught by the tree.” (Haine)

My answer kicked Sasae-chan deeper into despair.

There’s already no one who can think for her stead.

“I—!” (Sasae)

“Aah geez! How long do you plan on dancing around!” (Celestis)

Celestis got pissed, but the decision of Sasae-chan didn’t seem to be coming out.

That’s right. As we were in this, roots had come attacking us as well.

“Kugh...[Dark Matter, Set]!” (Haine)

I create a wall with the dark matter and stop the advance of the roots.

But I can’t go all out. If I were to go at full output in the destructive trait of the dark matter, it might erase even the divine energy of the assimilated people that maintains their very life, or they might get crushed by the heavy gravity.

“You! What are you doing?! Your wound is not closed yet!” (Celestis)

The healing from the water divine power of Celestis was still not done. She

can't leave her hands from it.

There's no other choice but for me to do this.

"Aah, why?! You are the personification of an evil Dark God, and yet, you—!!"
(Sasae)

Seeing this, Sasae-chan looks at this paralyzed.

This is bad. Releasing dark matter obviously affects my wound, and we are fighting a defensive battle at a foreign land. I can't expect help from Karen-san and Mirack who are evacuating the citizens.

The moment I felt like I couldn't keep up my defense anymore...

The roots that were attacking us had been suddenly cut into round slices.

"What?!"

"Haaah?!"

We witnessed this spectacle with surprise.

That root had people stuck onto it at its surface as well, but as if avoiding them, the sliced pieces were cut in a complex manner.

I could instantly tell at a glance that this was god-like skill.

And what did this was a single swing of the giant scythe; the earth scythe, Seeta.

But the one who was holding it wasn't Sasae-chan.

It was someone completely unexpected.

That is...

"B-Baa-chan?!" (Sasae) <Grandma>

Sasae-chan shouts this in surprise.

Chapter 124: Old Strong One

That's someone I know.

The granny I first met when arriving at Ishtar Blaze.

She transported me at the back of a Golem to the center of the city, and gave me a hunting request after; we had that kind of friendly relationship.

Why is that Obaa-san holding the earth scythe Seeta and rampaging big time?!

“Baa-chan, yer all right-dasu ka?! Or more like, since when did ya take my earth scythe-dasu?” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan runs towards the Obaa-san in happiness.

And in response to that Sasae-chan, the Obaa-san presents a fist to her forehead.

“Ouch?! What ya doing, *Baa-chan*?!” (Sasae) <grandma>

“Ye stupid grandchild! In this kind of serious situation, why on earth is the hero spaced out?!”

Eh, grandma? Eh, grandchild?

“Sorry for that, Visitor-san. Mah grandchild seems to have hurt ya.”

Is what the Obaa-san says as she lowers her head at me.

“After being appointed as the hero, I thought that her judgement would get better, but it looks like that ain't the case. A stupid child will stay a stupid child. It would have been better if the previous hero waited a bit longer before marrying. This lad doesn't have the makings for a hero yet.”

“But Baa-chan! That guy is the personification of the Dark God-dasu yo! The reason why Great Pillar-sama is angered is without doubt cuz—Ouch!” (Sasae)

She got the fist again.

“Sasae, I already knew that ye and that brat Founder were doing something secretly. Ye as well musta had quite a lot of things to think about as a hero. It

must be scary to do things without knowing what is the correct thing to do, right? But ya see, even with that, the one who has to take the first step faster than anyone else is the hero. Ya see, a hero is a hero cuz they have courage.”

The Obaa-san brandishes the earth scythe Seeta.

And then, jumps forward.

“It be important to listen to the oracle, but even with that, seeing all the things that are occurring in front of ya, what ye have to do should be obvious, isn’t it?!”

A storm dancing wildly in the sky; that’s the only way I could describe that sight that was unfolding before my eyes.

The earth scythe that the Obaa-san was manipulating was dancing lightly in the sky as if it weighed nothing, and on top of that, it was freely transforming and attacking the roots that were at the surroundings.

The blade entered the roots like jelly, and just like that, it severs them.

It is not physical strength. She is cutting them away relying solely on the weight of the giant scythe, and the Obaa-san was simply holding it.

...No, that’s not all she is doing. The Obaa-san was constantly pouring earth divine power to the earth scythe, and by doing that, it is changing its weight and solidity at a dizzying speed.

At times, as light as a balloon; at times, as heavy as steel; it is exactly because she changes its mass in just an instant that it felt as if that giant scythe was rampaging like a living being.

And the Obaa-san, that was controlling that beast of a giant scythe, was its beast tamer.

That means her skills are that much polished.

At the very least, more than the original owner, Sasae-chan.

Thanks to that, the roots that were trying to attack us were wiped out in the blink of an eye. The people that were captured by it were also rescued promptly.

“Strong! That Obaa-san is way too strong!” (Haine)

Now that I think about it, at the time when I first met her, she hit me with strength that I wouldn’t think possible from an old woman. Just what in the world is she?!

“Of course-dasu!! Baa-chan be a legend after all!” (Sasae)

“Eh?”

Sasae-chan shouts happily.

“She be called the strongest in the history of the Earth Church; the earth hero known as ‘Taker by the Roots’! That be my Baa-chan-dasu!!” (Sasae)

“Don’t go getting all high and mighty over something that’s not even about ya.”

“Ouch!”

And once again, she gets the fist.

“It be embarrassing. Yer past craziness’ just doesn’t disappear once it is been edged and will stay till death, just like wrinkles. Thanks to that past glory, mah grandchild was appointed as a hero when she is still so unripened. On top of that, she was spoiled rotten by her surroundings, and showed no signs of maturing.”

“Uwu~~.” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan moans as if being hit in a sore spot, and the Obaa-san gives her the giant scythe.

“Now then, take it back. The current owner is not me, but ya. Yer the current earth hero.”

“But Baa-chan, I be still—!!” (Sasae)

“I am getting old, ya see. I can’t maintain my full strength for even a minute. My breath is already rough and I can’t move anymore.”

Just like she said, the Obaa-san was breathing heavily and was sweating a lot.

“Sasae, ya only polished your Golem controlling abilities and didn’t polish yer body techniques, but right now, ya can’t be saying those things, ya know.

Today's enemy is Great Pillar-sama. That's why, Golems are not yer allies."

Just as the Obaa-san said, the Golems are still under the control of Mantle, capturing people and presenting them to the giant tree.

Karen-san and Mirack are trying to stop it. There were surges of light and fire faraway.

"Listen well. The true power of the earth divine power is the property alteration of a solid. If ya seriously pray for it, this giant scythe will become as light as cotton, as heavy as lead metal, as thin as paper, as thick as a shield, as hard as steel, as sticky as mud; all of those properties are possible. Be it fire, water, wind, light; it can cut anything. That be the earth scythe."

"U-Understood-dasu, Baa-chan!" (Sasae)

"Don't get weak on yer knees. Ya can do it."

Sasae-chan takes the earth scythe Seeta with an expression filled with determination.

Celestis and I looked at it from beginning to end from the sides.

"Uhm, you know. That Obaa-san might have said all those things but, I think that she herself is spoiling that brat like crazy as well." (Celestis)

"Yeah. But she is properly guiding her." (Haine)

She must have been raised caringly by many people just like this, like an egg. That is the earth hero, Gonbee Sasae.

"Now Sasae, go! What is the motto of the Earth Church's military power, the Scorched Earth Annihilation corps?!"

"Punch first, apologize later'-dasu!" (Sasae)

"If they don't forgive ya?!"

"Punch a lot first, and apologize later'-dasu!!" (Sasae)

Isn't that motto no good?

But it looks like it was effective.

Being given a push by her beloved grandmother, the hero received a hundred

times more energy.

“This be the time to make a decision-dasu! In order to fulfill my duty as a hero! In order to protect a lotsa people! The earth hero, Gonbee Sasae, will now be fighting against Great Pillar-sama!” (Sasae)

And then, she brandished the giant scythe and ran off.

Chapter 125: Battle at the Earth capital

“[Holy Light Blade]!”

“[Flame Hurricane]!”

“[Strengthening] and [Edge Tornado]!”

Karen-san, Mirack, and Sasae-chan were fighting at their own sides and were hindering the advance of the roots, but the situation didn't look good.

The opponent was undeniably gigantic after all. A giant tree that would make you wonder if it is serving as a pillar for the sky, Grandma Wood.

Even if it's a hero, the attack of a single human would only be damage on a level of pricking it with a thorn. On top of that, the giant roots that Grandma Wood uses as weapons have already captured a good amount of humans. There were so many that it made the surface of the roots uneven.

Of course, they couldn't attack recklessly, and the fight naturally turned conservative.

We were slowly being cornered and the state of the situation was slowly turning to the worse.

“As I thought...I have to go too!!” (Haine)

“And like I said, you *can't*

! Stay there! Just a bit more for your wound to close!!” (Celestis)

The wound at my abdomen that was made by the earth scythe Seeta was closing visibly, but it didn't reach full recovery.

In normal circumstances, it should be a wound that would require to be sewn up and have me rest for several weeks, so compared to that, this was a scarily fast recovery here. But right now, every second that passes is mortifying.

“...Ya see, we ended up relying way too much on things that we couldn't comprehend.”

The Obaa-san that was sitting at our side said this.

This person that has been confirmed to be a strong fighter in the past is already an old person and can't move much, but that defenseless posture of hers felt like it was saying: 'who cares anymore, whatever happens, happens', as if she had given up already.

"We know about the thing called ethereal that the far cities use. That be something that was found by the hands of people, researched by the hands of many people, and took several decades to develop. It be different from Golems."

The Obaa-san continues.

"We be given something we didn't understand at all, we relied solely on something we didn't understand. I thought it wasn't good for things to continue like this, and yet, I couldn't change things."

"...Even so, that doesn't serve as a reason to accept this destruction." (Haine)

My wound is mostly closed now.

I stop the healing, and stand up.

"You, wait a moment!" (Celestis)

Celestis hurriedly tried to put me back in place, but I didn't obey.

"I will defeat Grandma Wood –Great Pillar-sama. I will also save the people that were assimilated. Everyone is still alive. That thing's objective is to obtain stable prayer—spiritual energy

absorption, so there's no point if it were to kill them." (Haine)

"How are we going to defeat such a big thing like that?! Also, saving the people that are assimilated to the tree is practically an impossible feat. Just how are you going to safely sever the violently wriggling roots? Moreover, save those several hundreds of people!" (Celestis)

"The trunk itself." (Haine)

I point at Grandma Wood.

"The tree's body is the trunk. That guy is using only the roots to assimilate humans, and the assimilated people are concentrated on the roots. In other

words, if we blow up the trunk, the people will be safe.” (Haine)

Of course, plants are filled with vital energy. Just like weeds, even if you cut them into a thousand pieces, as long as the roots remain, it can grow as many times as it wants, which could be a plausible possibility here.

But, even if that really is the case, if we blow up the trunk, and on top of that, wipe out all the leaves and branches, the tree won't be able to receive nutrients from the sunlight, and there will definitely be some damage dealt.

“No no no no! Wait wait wait there!” (Celestis)

Celestis immediately objects to my plan.

“You are saying this incredibly casually but, can you blow up that big tree?! That thing's size is not something to sneeze at, you know?! The biggest monster I know of is the Great Sea Dragon I fought not that long ago, but there's the need to combine several hundreds of those in order to reach the size of this tree, you know?! And you are saying you are going to blow it up?!” (Celestis)

“I can.” (Haine)

My affirmation left Celestis speechless.

“But in order to do that, we have to lower those rampaging roots. Right now they are wriggling and jumping around, and there are times when they would get close to the trunk; with that, there's the risk of dragging those too in it. I won't be able to cleanly blow the trunk up!” (Haine)

Celestis was looking at me with a clear face of: ‘did this guy hit his head?’.

“Understood! That role, I will accept it!!”

The voice that reverberated from the wireless transmitter was from Karen.

Looks like our conversation reached their ears as well.

“We heroes will lure the roots and lower them to the ground! Haine-san, please concentrate on attacking the main body! Mirack-chan! Sasae-chan! You can do it, right?!” (Karen)

“Is there are a time when I have said no to what you propose, Karen?!”
(Mirack)

“I don’t understand, but I understand-dasu!!” (Sasae)

“Wait, you girls!!” (Celestis)

Celestis voices her disapproval alone, but it soon disappeared.

She already knows that once Karen-san has said something, she has a personality that doesn’t go back anymore.

“—I get it, geez! Let’s go with that plan! Get it, Haine-chi? This basically means that the four of us will be entrusting our life to you! Make it succeed with franticness on the level of making all of us your brides, okay?!” (Celestis)

And just when she was lacking on things to say, Celestis-san goes and says something outrageous.

“That sounds nice! Let’s do that!!” (Karen)

Karen-san, please don’t thoughtlessly bite.

“Anyways, I will be moving to a place where I can snipe Grandma Wood. Please tell the others not to get closer than necessary. If they get caught in it, they won’t be leaving even dust behind after all.” (Haine)

“I don’t understand well, but I do understand that you are incredibly confident. Okay. You take this as well!” (Celestis)

Saying this, Celestis takes out something from her pocket and throws it to me.

It is the same thing that Celestis has in her ear. A wireless device?

“It is the latest model of the head office in Hydra Ville. You equip it by fixing that hook at your ear. With that, you will be able to fight freely with both arms and still maintain communication. I said this already but, the only ones who have been successful in making a small version like that is us!” (Celestis)

It is true that being able to communicate even when afar is a grateful thing.

I equip the transmission device to my right ear just as told.

“Haine-san, I have something to talk to you about later.” (Karen)

And, the moment I equipped it, I heard the voice of Karen.

“I will have you properly explain the reason why you went on your own and

left me behind, okay?" (Karen)

It looks like things are getting scary.

But in order to connect the future to that scary event, I have to obtain victory here.

Understanding what everyone has to do, we move towards that goal.

Chapter 126: Heroes vs Divine Tree

I control the dark matter and fly into the sky.

Looking down at a decent height, I could see the full picture of Grandma Wood once again.

I knew that the roots that were jutting out from the ground were wriggling like tentacles and were being used as weapons, but now that I look at it like this, the roots were branched to some extent, but there's no more than 5 main roots.

There's probably several times more of those underground, but it is most likely not utilizing those to maintain balance.

In the first place, the important role of the roots is to support the trunk that is towering high up. If it were to use all of them as weapons and takes them out from underground, the tree wouldn't be able to maintain balance and fall.

Those five are probably the bare limit to how many Grandma Wood can take out while still maintaining balance.

At least that's what I would like to think. If it were to increase even more, no matter how reliable of a reinforcement were to come, we wouldn't be able to control the situation.

I heard a shout from my ear.

"And so, what are we going to do?! Just trying to stop those giant roots of the tree is already a crazy tough mission, you know! It might even be an impossible task!" (Celestis)

"You might already know, but I will say it just in case! Don't touch that root directly! We will end up assimilated as well after all!" (Mirack)

"Eeh?! But I can't do proper damage unless I cut it directly-dasu!" (Sasae)

"Calm down, Sasae-chan! If you do a hit-and-run, you won't get caught!" (Karen)

Their voices were coming at me from the wireless device.

Thanks to the work of the heroes, there's already no people around the perimeter of battle. Looks like they have been safely evacuated.

But now that there's no people around, the Golems that now have nothing to do were gathering around where Karen-san and her group are in, and the more time passes, the higher the chances they will be crushed by the numbers.

"From what I see from above, the Golems have changed their objective and are heading your direction! Their moves are dull, but they are trying to crowd onto you! The more time it passes, the difficult it will be to move!" (Haine)

"Above?! Where are you at?!" (Celestis)

"I am going to be entering preparations, so I can't help. I repeat! I can't help! Please stop the movements of the roots by yourselves! I am counting on you!" (Haine)

I was already in the process of compressing my dark matter.

I would say it will take me until around the time I count to 1,000. Will the heroes be able to stop the movements of the roots by then?

"Everyone, hear me out!" (Karen)

The voice of Karen-san reverberates from the wireless device.

"Each of us fighting one separately won't let us stop the roots from moving! Let's gather up, cooperate, and find a method that we can do!" (Karen)

"Cooperate...in other words—?!" (Mirack)

"When in trouble, combined elements, right?!" (Celestis)

That's right. In the long history of the five churches, not only the five have been fighting each other, this in turn made the heroes antagonistic with each other too.

When those heroes have overcome their conflicts with each other and put their hearts together, put their elements together, a new element is created.

That miracle has saved those girls from danger several times already.

"Eh? What you girls talking about-dasu?" (Sasae)

The new member Sasae-chan was the only one who couldn't keep up with the

conversation.

“It is that! The thing that destroyed your Golems in Apollon City!” (Mirack)

“But what will we be combining with what?! Mine and Karen-chi’s ‘Mirage’ may serve to confuse, but it won’t be fulfilling the request of stopping its movements, you know!” (Celestis)

“‘Lightning’ and ‘Explosion’ have way too high of a possibility to drag the people that are captured in the roots along with it, so we can’t use those either. In other words, the things we have used until now are all out of the question. That’s why, the one that we can put our hopes into is...at a new possibility!” (Karen)

A new possibility?

“.....I see. Sasae! Where are you right now?!” (Celestis)

“What-dasu?! I be sending a sign-dasu!” (Sasae)

Soon after, a big cloud of dust rose up in the battlefield at a certain place.

“—Okay!”

Not long after...

“—Alright! I am the first one! Sasae, let’s do it!” (Mirack)

“Hiiiaa?! What-dasu?! Suddenly hugging me?! Why ye suddenly pouring divine power inside mah body-dasu?!” (Sasae)

“It is fine, just match my breathing! Mix the divine power! Chant the words that appear inside your heart just as it is! Get it?!” (Mirack)

“Fueeeeee?!” (Sasae)

““[Magma Ocean]-dasu!!”” (Mirack+Sasae)

The ground was dyed completely red.

I was in standby high up in the sky, so I could tell. It was letting out a fluid-type of shine that was different from fire, and the ground was shining in red.

Could that be...lava?!

The combination of fire and earth has created this lava?!

Because the ground has been covered in a liquid that is several thousand degrees in temperature, it made the roots of Grandma Wood falter and loosen their attacks but...

“This is just...!” (Mirack)

“It would burn the captured people into a crisp-dasu!!” (Sasae)

That’s right. If they were to make a wave from the lava that appeared, they would be able to deal heavy damage to Grandma Wood, but the people that are captured in the roots will certainly die.

Just like how ‘Lightning’ and ‘Explosion’ are no good, the new ‘Magma’ is obviously also an overkill.

“Geez, as expected of the fire element! No matter what you mix into it, it all turns into something atrocious!” (Celestis)

The voice I heard from the wireless device was Celestis. The next one to run to Sasae-chan was her huh.

“Just watch! This idol hero, Celestis-sama, will produce magnificent and beautiful water divine power, and do a complete make-up of this country bumpkin girl!” (Celestis)

“Hiiih?! I be in great demand for a while now-dasu?!” (Sasae)

It is hard to tell from just their voices alone, but Sasae-chan is probably in a state where she is being treated like a pet by a group of girls.

It is the pattern where she gets pampered so much that the next day she will end up all exhausted.

And then, what appeared from mixing ‘water’ and ‘earth’...

“”[Tree Plant]!!” (Celestis+Sasae)

With the two as the center, a green color mist was released, which is something I could see from my point of view.

What’s that mist?

And then, it fell due to gravity and falls to the ground, and when that happened, a surprising change occurred.

Grass began visibly growing on the surface of the ground, moreover, it was stretching without limits.

It was terrifyingly thick ivies. That's the kind of plant it gave me the impression of.

Those wrapped around the roots of Grandma Wood and drag them to the ground.

Because they were plants, I thought for a second that they might be enemies, so I was cautious, but as I thought, it seems to be the combined element of Sasae-chan and Celestis.

Mixing earth and water, 'Green' appears. Moisturizing the earth, it invigorates the plants.

"Bingo!! Look at that! Being wrapped in ivy, the roots of that bastard tree can't do anything! It is fulfilling the request of Haine-chi a 100%! Truly fighting fire with fire, plants with plants! As expected, of an idol. This is Celes-tan!" (Celestis)

"Enough with the boasting! If the combination of you and Sasae is a jackpot, grab the other roots as well." (Mirack)

"Yes yes, I get it. I will move now—wait, eeeeh?!" (Celestis)

But she couldn't. The Golems that had gathered at the surroundings were still continuing to surround them after all.

The giant roots that Grandma Wood is swinging around are 5 in total. Right now, only one of them has been wrapped and immobilized.

To restrain the remaining 4, she has to get close to where each of them is and activate the green element. But to do that, she has to get through the encirclement of Golems, and even if she manages to, it would take too much time.

"Oi, Sasae! You were controlling Golems in Apollon City, right?! Can't you have them retreat with that ability of yours?!" (Mirack)

"It be impossible-dasu! They are not taking orders-dasu! The order authority was most likely taken away by Great Pillar-sama-dasu yo!!" (Sasae)

The one who was giving birth to the Golems is the Mother Monster, Grandma Wood.

The residents called it Great Pillar-sama and it should be easy even for Sasae-chan to imagine that it possesses high influence with the Golems.

But this doesn't link to a solution.

They have to do something fast, or my preparations will be ending before they manage to stop them!

"Mirack-chi, you don't have a role anymore, so how about going kamikaze on those Golems and self-destruct?" (Celestis)

"When that happens, I will make sure to bring you along with me! But, it looks like this time there's no need for that." (Mirack)

Weaving through the encirclement of Golems and passing by the giants one after the other, a silver flash approaches the three.

"Karen!" "Karen-chi!" "Karen-nee-chan!"

The light hero arrives at this moment.

Chapter 127: Outside reality

Karen-san arrives to where the team is.

“You are late, Karen! I was tired of waiting!!” (Mirack)

“We have found a solution, but there’s a lot of problems!! For the combined element of Sasae-chi and I to bind the roots, there’s the need to approach the objective to a certain degree! But for the sake of that, the Golems are a complete hindrance!!” (Celestis)

“What should we do?! Have Karen and I take the front and advance as we open the path?!” (Mirack)

The four congregated and their morale increased by quite a lot.

They are brimming with the will of overcoming this crisis by joining forces.

“...Hmm, it probably won’t make it in time. Haine-san will soon finish his preparations.” (Karen)

I felt the gaze of Karen-san from below.

“Haine-san is compressing the dark matter he releases at an incredible rate. It will probably be finished soon. We most likely don’t have the time to go around binding each root one by one. That’s why...let’s bet on the last possibility.” (Karen)

“The last possibility?” (Mirack)

“That’s right. There’s still one combination that we haven’t tried out yet, right?” (Karen)

“Understood! Then Celestis and I will hold back the Golems!” (Mirack)

“Sasae-chi! Do your best, got it?! This is the Earth capital, Ishtar Blaze! This is the main stage of the earth hero! Make sure you rock it!” (Celestis)

I hear the sound of fierce fighting from the wireless device.

But I could tell that there was a side that was incredibly silent.

“Let’s go, Sasae-chan. Light and earth combined element. With that, we will

create a breakthrough.” (Karen)

“Understood-dasu. I been smushed for a while now, so I already got the gist of it-dasu yo!!” (Sasae)

And then, the different types of divine power were mixed, and after mixing, one new type of divine power appears.

“?!!! What?!” (Mirack)

“The Golems are—?!” (Celestis)

The first ones to notice the abnormality was Mirack and Celestis who were fighting at the frontline.

“The movements of the Golems have stopped! What happened?!” (Mirack)

“Don’t lower your guard, Mirack-chi! This might be the prelude to a new setup that large tree bastard is preparing!” (Celestis)

But that wasn’t the case.

In the moment the stopped Golems began moving again...their objective was already not the heroes –it was the roots of Grandma Wood.

Even with their big frames, the Golems jumped, used each other as footholds, and clung onto the giant roots, trying to bring them down to the ground.

The Golems were indeed encircling the heroes, but most of the Golems were scattered at the surroundings of the giant tree, so the attack occurred on all the roots at the same time.

In order to not hurt the people assimilated at the surface, they did it gently, but also firmly held down the roots to the ground.

That means the Golems are completely following our will.

Why did the Golems suddenly becomes our allies?

“Could it be...was this done by Karen and Sasae?” (Mirack)

Mirack reached straight to that conclusion.

“Light doesn’t only provide energy, it can also be used as a way to relay information. The things we see are because we can visualize the reflected light

with our eyes, and light tells us a variety of information.” (Mirack)

“If I remember correctly, when Sasae-chi gives orders to the Golems, she pours earth divine power, right? When the light divine power and earth divine power combined, the earth divine power rode the light that is in the air, and was able to reach several Golems in far distances at the same time? Is that the combined element of light and earth?” (Celestis)

Celestis also joins in the deduction.

Even if that’s correct, the current Golems are being controlled by the highest authority holder; they should be moving on the direct orders of Mother Earth Mantle.

Are you telling me they have rewritten that control? Humans have?

“I...really can’t believe it-dasu yo.” (Sasae)

From the wireless device, a small and fragile voice is transmitted.

It is Sasae-chan’s voice.

“Golems been together with me since I be born-dasu. They been together with me since forever. They helped me, protected me. They be the friends of all the people in Ishtar Blaze-dasu yo. That’s why, I really can’t believe that they are enemies-dasu yo!!” (Sasae)

The hero, that lived in this land and knew of this land more than anyone else, raised her voice along with those violent emotions rising in her.

That voice rode the light and reaches the far ends of the world.

“Nice, Sasae-chan. Shout more. More!!” (Karen)

“Please, Golems!! Please help us-dasu yo!!” (Sasae)

The Golems overlapped and fuse into a giant Golem.

It was bigger than any Golem I have seen. To make a comparison, it is big enough to fight against the Fire Cow Phalaris and the Hydra Serpent. Moreover, fight several of them.

With that sufficient frame, it holds down the roots of Grandma Wood. The people at its surface are also okay.

Placing all of its weight, it felt as if it were trying to fix the rampaging roots in place.

The Golems are helping the humans again.

They have been relied upon so heavily, and in the end, betrayed them. In a situation where no one believed in them anymore, Sasae-chan was the only one who blindly believed in them, and that believing heart turned it into reality.

A young hero; a country bumpkin hero; a hero that doesn't know things and stupidly causes problems to others. But that foolishness of hers is a foolishness that allows her to stupidly believe until the very end.

A believe towards the Golems that has been with her since birth.

It is because she believes in the Golems that she believed in Grandma Wood who gave birth to them; It is because she believes in the Golems that she believed in the Mother Earth God Mantle that they served.

Even if she ends up not believing in those two, she still didn't stop believing in the Golems.

A foolishness that will be forgotten in time as you grow up; a foolishness that comes from youth.

Sasae-chan's voice reached the places that it should have reached.

"Seriously, to think that a hero would ask for help from someone else to change the situation..." (Mirack)

"Isn't that fine? Sasae-chi gives out an aura that makes you want to dote on her, right? Don't you think that's a quality of a hero as well?" (Celestis)

Even Mirack and Celestis laugh at the silly miracle that Sasae-chan created.

But that's fine.

I love that foolishness that allowed for this miracle.

As someone who loves humans, loving only a part of the humans that I like would make that love of mine a lie after all.

And so, I finished what was in my hand right in time.

A compressed to the very limits dark matter; a 'Micro Black Hole'.

I actually didn't want to use it.

The strongest destruction method I possess as the Dark God. This is something that is originally used in order to reset a world that isn't favorable.

By reducing its power to a trillion times, I get the thing that is in my hands.

But even with that, it is still hard to use this technique with my human body.

"...Even so, this is still plenty enough to erase half of your body!!" (Haine)

Giant tree!

Thanks to the heroes, the fear of dragging humans into it has completely disappeared.

There's already no need to worry.

I stabilize my aim and release it.

"Wait!!"

But, at the place where I aimed at, at the light brown trunk of Grandma Wood that covers my whole view, there was one part that was shining fluorescently.

That shine had the figure of a human.

It was the Fairy of Mother Earth Mantle.

Chapter 128: Black Demise

Mother Earth God, Mantle.

The very culprit of this disaster has showed up again.

I can understand the reason of it.

She knows that she has been checkmated.

I take away the wireless device from my ear, and throw it away.

“Mantle, move away.” (Haine)

Even if we are far away, if we overlap the wavelength of Gods, we can have a conversation plenty well.

“If you think there won’t be any problems in being crushed because you are in the temporal form of a Fairy, you are heavily mistaken, you know?” (Haine)

“Why, Entropy-san?! Didn’t you praise me?! Didn’t you acknowledge that what I was doing was splendid?! And yet, are you going to reject everything now?!” (Mantle)

Mantle’s objection was painful.

“Everyone will be happy! Humans don’t have to fight, don’t have to work. They can push away all the troublesome things aside, and live forever! In return, I receive soul energy that is similar to that of prayer energy. Everyone gets something out of it, and no one suffers! Why are you getting in the way of such a splendid thing?!” (Mantle)

“Mantle...” (Haine)

That’s right. I didn’t notice how scary you could be.

Without understanding the other side of that frailty of yours, I thoughtlessly praised you, and as a result, promoted your rampage.

Inflation most likely noticed that madness that was hiding inside of you, and in order for it to not surface, she was always careful about it and pushing it down.

That's probably the reason for Mantle's usual weak demeanor she normally shows.

"I am sorry. I was unable to truly understand you. Without understanding everything, I looked at only a part of you. I could only appreciate a part of you that was convenient for me. I am sorry. I am truly sorry!!" (Haine)

"Entropy-san, what are you saying?" (Mantle)

"But Mantle, happiness is probably not that simple of a subject. Just what is true happiness? An answer to that won't easily come out. Everyone gets troubled by that question, and each individual has a completely different answer to it. That's why there is no true answer, not now, and not ever." (Haine)

Making someone else happy.

That might be meddlesome, but as a wish, I have to admit that a wish like that is not wrong in the least.

But to ignore the will of the other party and push your own answer at someone else, I think it is an irreparable sin.

Rather than obtaining happiness, thinking about what is happiness; for humans, the search for that in itself is important.

"That's why, Mantle, I can't forgive you, the you that is trying to steal the right of humans to think. I will be erasing that very action of yours. Just like how humans certainly die, just like how demise will always occur in the millenias of this world, right now, I will..." (Haine)

...Provide that demise to you and your subordinate

"Heavily decreased [Black Hole Cannon]" (Haine)

From my hand, something that was as small as a grain was shot.

"I will say it again, Mantle. Move away." (Haine)

Right now, it was docilely flying in one direction, and in the moment it arrived at the trunk of the giant tree, it does as it was set up to do beforehand...

It swallowed everything.

“Kyaaa!! Whaaat?!!” (Mantle)

The dark matter, that was compressed to the very limits, increased the gravity due to its mass, and when it reached a certain critical point, it turns into a black hole that releases unlimited gravity.

When that happens, nothing can escape. Whether it is something with substance or not, everything will get caught in its gravity, and be thrown into the depths of darkness.

Even the earth Mother Monster that possesses the most mass in this whole world had its wooden body creak conspicuously, and even the very creaking sound got swallowed along with the air, got crushed, broken, and disappears inside the darkness.

And then, the other things as well.

“lyaaaa!! Why?! Why is my body as well?! Even my body is being dragged by the gravity~~~!” (Mantle)

Mantle’s desperate scream.

That’s why I warned you to move away from there.

This last resort of I -the Dark God Entropy-is not something sweet that would ignore things just because they don’t have an actual body.

A body that has nothing to do with mass... It can even swallow the soul of a God.

In my conversation with the Fire God Nova, I told him that ‘I can’t seal Gods’.

I can’t seal, but I can erase them.

To the depths of the darkness inside the Black Hole, that is.

This power that I didn’t use on even Nova and Coacervate; to think I would be forced to use it in you.

“.....You are the epitome of pity, Mother Earth God, Mantle.” (Haine)

If I had been more careful in my choice of words, we might have entered an understanding.

“Kyaaaaaaaaa!!! Noooooo!!” (Mantle)

Swallowing even the cries of the Mother Earth God, the Black Hole in time swallows even itself, and disappears without leaving a trace.

Just like how I set it up to do –it doesn't leave anything behind.

Most of the giant tree was swallowed, and excluding the lower part that was gouged out and was left as just a stump...it didn't have a single leaf remaining.

If I had set up the range, I could have made it so that the outside didn't have a single wound, but the inside would not even have dust left.

My ultimate destructive technique.

That's why I didn't want to use it ever if possible.

But because of it, we were able to win this time.

No, it wasn't only the power of the Black Hole.

The four heroes that came at the perfect time and did a splendid job at supporting me.

The victory was theirs.

And like this, the curtains to the battle in Ishtar Blaze closed.

The people that were assimilated into the roots of Grandma Wood were cut out one by one in time, and we managed to save them all without sacrificing anyone.

Separated from the tree bark, they regained their consciousness right after, and were able to operate just like before without change.

In terms of humans, there were no lives that were lost. In that sense, it can be said to be a blessing. But in exchange, the damage to the land was terrible.

Because of the rampaging of Grandma Wood, most of the buildings collapsed, the ground was broken, as if this were what was left after a natural disaster.

The sight was so terrible that it made me think it would be next to impossible to return it to being one of the five major cities.

But that almost impossible task is something that humans have to overcome.

No matter what difficulties are in front of them, to think about it and overcome it is what makes a human.

Chapter 129: Rebirth of the Earth capital

“Thanks for saving the Earth capital from its crisis.”

The Earth Founder was giving its thanks to the heroes that were lined up.

In place of the destroyed Grand Crimson Palace, they were at the temporary Earth Church headquarters that was build impromptu. And the first thing that was done there was to sing praises to the heroes’ achievements.

“Your presence in this time of need was an incredible blessing for us the Earth Church. The Light Church, Fire Church, and Water Church; you who have been fighting each other for a long time, have extended a helping hand to us without hesitation. This kindness of yours, as the Earth Founder of the Earth Church, I want to convey my thanks to...”

“.....”

“...Let’s just stop it there.”

“Baa-chan?!” (Sasae)

The Earth Founder...or more like, the new person that has assumed the post of Earth Founder, Sasae-chan’s grandma, couldn’t endure the stiff talk for even a moment.

The former Earth Founder, who was the first to be assimilated by Grandma Wood, was safely rescued, but because of the mental damage he received from the shock, he has fallen into stupefaction, and was deemed as impossible for him to continue in his post as an Earth Founder.

Well, I was in the place when it all happened. He was face to face with the Mother Earth God that he has been worshipping his whole life and was about to be killed by her, so I can imagine that the shock he received was something that surpasses imagination.

And so, the one who took his place as the new Founder was the one who made great achievements as a hero a long time ago, and is considered the legendary strongest, known as ‘Taker by the roots’; the Obaa-san of Sasae-chan.

“That’s no good. As I thought, I shouldn’t be doing things I am not used to doing at this age. Mah stiff shoulders are gettin’ even rougher-sa ne.”

“But Baa-chan! Ya need to have dignity as a Founder-dasu yo! Especially today where yer officially face to face with the people of the other churches-dasu! If ya don’t act properly, it will be a shame-dasu yo!!” (Sasae)

“Those be the words of the girl that made an embarrassment of herself?”

“Aw?!” (Sasae)

The hero that is dressed up today, Sasae-chan, has been shot down.

“Well, it be hard to convey feelings with decorated words after all. I’ll be straight. Ya have my deepest gratitude.”

It is true that those words reached our hearts deeper than any ornamented words.

Karen-san, Mirack, Celestis, who were participating in this, were also showing embarrassment.

“Ishtar Blaze may have ended up all beaten up, but well, let’s think about it as the price we gotta pay for relyin’ on something we didn’t understand and just start from zero. Luckily, the agricultural land at the surroundings of the city don’t have a single scratch. In my eyes, that can be called the core of this city, so things should work out. And most importantly, there be no deaths.”

“Then, the Golems are...” (Haine)

I, who was standing humbly at a corner, slipped in a question.

Karen-san pushed me heavily into participating in the ceremony as well, but since I am not a hero, I also heavily refused.

...The Golems were...fearsome enemies this time around.

And their parent Grandma Wood -which is revered as Great Pillar-sama by the humans-was a fearsome enemy as well.

Until now, the Golems have been helping humans in their daily life, plowed the fields, transported goods, and even became houses using their own bodies, and yet, they suddenly changed; they captured humans, and were presenting

them to the giant tree as food.

The people of Ishtar Blaze saw Great Pillar-sama as the blessing of the Mother Earth God, but its betrayal and the betrayal of its Golem children was shocking enough to not want to accept it.

A heated discussion was made regarding this matter at the Earth Church, and there were even extreme arguments like: 'Great Pillar-sama was dispatched by the Mother Earth God to eradicate humans'.

It was a radical statement that might even invite the fall of the Earth Church, but because of the words of the heroes that came from the outside, the fact that monsters are originally enemies of humans was pointed out, and chaos was withheld.

In the end, the decision that was made was that 'Great Pillar-sama has no connections with the Mother Earth God', and 'Great Pillar-sama was planning on making the humans fall into its trap as a monster, and grew closer to humans for that sake'.

Of course, the truth was different. The real reason for this turmoil was the goodwill the Mother Earth God had towards humans, and her helpless difference of values she held.

But rather than exposing those, it was better to keep those secret in order for the humans to stand up as fast as possible.

In order to have them lean onto something, I thought that this was a convenient thing to use.

But even so, there's still a problem I can't allow for it to stay as it is.

The Golems.

Even if Grandma Wood has fallen, there's still a good amount of Golems that are still remaining.

In the battle, Sasae-chan and the others managed to steal back the control and once again turned to being allies of the humans, but...

"About that... Sasae."

"Yes-dasu?" (Sasae)

“Ya say it.”

Being prompted by the Obaa-san, Sasae-chan speaks.

“...Right now in Ishtar Blaze...around 4,300 Life Blocks have been confirmed-dasu. With Great Pillar-sama gone, they ain't gonna increase more-dasu, but with the incident this time, the doubts towards Golems has increased, there been opinions of disposing of all of them-dasu.” (Sasae)

That's the natural mentality of humans –or more like, the natural mentality of living beings.

The moment it shows to be a danger to their life once, leaving them close normally doesn't occur.

“And the one who stopped that from happening was this one person alone.”

Telling Sasae-chan to explain, and yet, the Obaa-san cuts into it and says her piece.

“It be true that we have been betrayed. But the reason why we were able to develop this much was without doubt thanks to the Golems. To forget that and just say: ‘can't believe in them, let's trash them’, that would be way too ungrateful, or so she said.”

“I understand. Sasae-chan really loves Golems after all.” (Karen)

Karen-san says.

“When we combined the light and earth divine power, I also heard the voice of Sasae-chan that was calling out to the Golems. Even if they have no souls, even if they don't have a will, as long as humans love them as much as she does, Golems won't betray you ever again.” (Karen)

“Karen-nee-chan!! I...I also love Karen-nee-chan-dasu!!” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan hugged Karen-san.

Two girls were firmly hugging each other.

“...That girl, I wonder if I can slowly bake her up.” (Mirack)

“Like I said, don't get jealous, fire hero.” (Celestis)

As if saying ‘what a hopeless girl’, the Obaa-san lets out a sigh.

“At any rate, we have been relying on the Golems for several decades, it be impossible for us to stand back up without the Golems. At that time, the one who gave out an evil order to the Golems was Great Pillar-sama. Now that Great Pillar-sama ain’t here anymore, the Golems shouldn’t go doing anymore evils.”

It looks like that is the conclusion they arrived at.

“Don’t know if to call it a blessing but, now that Great Pillar-sama ain’t here anymore, no more Golems will be born. It will probably take around 10 to 20 years until the Golems we currently have to break or decay.”

“So in that long time, you are planning on changing slowly into ethereal machines huh.” (Haine)

That sounds good.

From what I have seen, even now when I have erased Mother Earth Mantle into darkness, I can’t throw away the believe that what she has formed in this land was an utopia.

The humans and monsters that were originally mutual enemies were able to hold hands this much. That is something splendid, and I don’t want to think that was a mistake.

The time a God lives is long.

After several millenniums, several epochs, will I be able to meet Mantle who has gone through the opposite side of space-time?

“That’s right-dasu! That’s why, for a while more, Golems will be the friends of humans-dasu!!” (Sasae)

Sasae-chan says filled with energy.

This destroyed Ishtar Blaze will most likely return to its former glory soon with the help of the Golems.

The human world, the nature world; today as well, it continues to move forward.

Chapter 130: Hot Spring

“Aah~, I am being revived.”

After finishing the ceremony in the temporary Earth Church headquarter, we were allowed to relax.

There was only me in this open air bath.

Sinking my body in the warm water, I washed the exhaustion that has been accumulated in these last few days.

“But to think there would be warm water coming out from the ground. I didn’t know about that at all.” (Haine)

It is apparently called hot springs.

It is a specialty of Ishtar Blaze, warm water of moderate temperature that comes out from the ground. Inside the country, there’s several tens of facilities that have dug them out.

So this is also a blessing of the earth huh.

There was fear that the underground construction would change because of the rampage of Grandma Wood, but because there were no changes in the amount coming out, they deemed it as not having any problems in its utilization.

In order to give a warm reception to the heroes that saved the city, they have reserved the whole facility for us. I kind of feel bad for that, but...

“Even those kind of feelings melt away here~~, hot springs are the best~.” (Haine)

“It truly does feel good. It would have been nice if Yorishiro-sama were to have come as well.”

“If she were here, there would be no relaxing. It would turn into a battle for my chastity—hm?” (Haine)

By the time I noticed, there was Karen-san using the hot springs at my side.

“Ueeee?!” (Haine)

Why is Karen-san here?! Isn't this the male side, for male use ONLY?!

“Why?! Why are you here, Karen-san?! This is bad! If you are in the bath, it must mean that you are naked, right?! Is this another plan of yours to destroy my self-control?!” (Haine)

“Don't worry, Haine-san.” (Karen)

Karen-san makes a small splashing sound...and stands up.

Of course, most of the body that was hidden inside the water had come out, and I thought her naked body would be exposed to me but...

“Hm?”

“It is apparently called yukatabira <single-layer absorbent bathrobe (don't know the english equivalent)>. When men and women want to enter the hot spring together, they apparently give you this so you can enter the hot spring while wearing it.” (Karen)

It is true that the current Karen-san is wearing something I haven't seen before, and an event that surpassed morals was avoided.

But this in itself...the white cloth wet in the water is sticking to her skin, moreover, it is semi-transparent... It is safe, and yet, I gives out an unspeakable immoral sensation.

“Please don't misjudge me. I have decided that the moment I give my chastity to Haine-san, it will be together with my friend, Yorishiro-sama. I am not the type of woman that would steal the march after all.” (Karen)

“I-Is that so?!” (Haine)

“And, Haine-san...” (Karen)

The hot spring made a splashing sound again, and Karen-san approached me.

Different from her, I was thinking of entering the hot springs alone, so I am not wearing this so called yukatabira.

That's why I can't escape. Even if I try to escape, the moment I step out of the water, I will be showing a lot of unsightly things to Karen-san.

“I have finally gotten time to ask you about it. Why did you leave me and went on your own?” (Karen)

“Uhm...!” (Haine)

Now that she says it, Karen-san was really angry that I decided on going alone this time around.

But there’s no helping it. Karen-san has her own duties as a hero, and I can’t openly talk about defeating the Mother Monsters, so I didn’t want to involve the hero, who is the representative of the church, as much as possible.

It is true that Karen-san and the others appearing at the last moment saved me, but the trigger to that was Karen-san being in Apollon City and meeting with Sasae-chan. That’s why, in terms of result, it was probably the right decision to have her stay.

“...”

“.....”

For some reason, the silence was heavy and painful.

“...I was worried, you know.” (Karen)

“Eh?”

“Haine-san was not there, and just imagining Haine-san fighting alone somewhere I don’t know of made me unable to sleep at night. What if Haine-san had gotten in trouble, I could save you if I were there -but what if I am not there? Just by thinking that, my heart was in so much pain.” (Karen)

“Y-You see—!” (Haine)

“Do you think I am being too conceited for thinking that someone like me can save Haine-san?!” (Karen)

I was being pushed back by the spirit of Karen-san!

Not only can’t I refute her, I can’t even justify myself.

“There’s three Mother Monsters remaining. Of course, you plan on defeating them all, right Haine-san? At that time, I will go with you. Even if you tell me I can’t, I will. Got it?” (Karen)

“Y-Yes!” (Haine)

Is the only thing I could say.

I was not allowed any other answer.

This is already not the pressure of a hero, it was the pressure of a woman. I have been told this before, but to think Karen-san had such an intense side to her.

“Good.” (Karen)

Maybe she was satisfied with my answer, Karen-san smiles.

“Now then, the complicated talk is over now. From now on, let’s have a fun talk..... Everyone, you can come in now!” (Karen)

“Wa?!”

Without giving me time to understand, an emergency pushed my way.

To my surprise, Mirack, Celestis, and even Sasae-chan invaded the male side.

“So you are finally done, Karen.” (Mirack)

“You made us wait too long. It is fine since we were dressed, but if we had been waiting while naked, it would have been so cold that we would definitely be freezing by now.” (Celestis)

“It’s been long since I be in a hot spring-dasu~.” (Sasae)

Everyone is wearing the yukatabira, so it is still fine since they are hiding their skin though.

...Wait, is it really fine?!

Is it really okay for this many girls to intrude while a man is bathing?!

You are heroes, right?! Is this okay in terms of public appearance?!

“Isn’t it fine for these beauties to reward the man that has contributed plenty this time? Or more like, what was with that super ultimate technique? If you had used something like that with the Great Sea Dragon, wouldn’t it have ended in one hit?” (Celestis)

“Just think of me as an observer. Leaving aside the idol slut, if you send an

indecent look to Karen, I will immediately break 'it', okay?" (Mirack)

Celestis and Mirack are going way overboard!

And the last one, the new member Sasae-chan...

"I be truly sorry-dasu!" (Sasae)

She suddenly prostrated in the bathtub?!

Is that okay?! Your head is completely inside the water, are your lungs going to be alright?!

And more importantly, what is she apologizing for?

"Ya ain't an evil Dark God-dasu! Even though ya put yer life at stake to save mah homeland, I didn't understand that and attacked you. I be truly sorry-dasu!" (Sasae)

Sasae-chan let her head out of the water and speaks.

"Ah, so that's what you mean." (Haine)

"That oracle mustta been a mistake too-dasu! I be thinking about doing my best with everyone from now on-dasu!" (Sasae)

Is what she says as she once again plunges her head into the water and prostrates.

But, as I thought, this girl gets really passionate once she is onto one thing.

"Now then, let's leave the stiff talk there. And so, what do you want to do? What kind of service should we provide this heroic man?" (Celestis)

"How about we all wash his body? This is something that's fitting for a bath, and Haine-san would feel like a king." (Karen)

"Understood-dasu! I be doing my best, I be scrubbin' so hard, skin will peel off-dasu!" (Sasae)

"You understand what will happen if you react, right? I will break it." (Mirack)

Wait a moment!

What are you doing trying to drag me down into such a perverse pleasure?!

As I have been saying, I am not wearing a yukatabira like you girls, so when I

get out from the water, a lot of unsightly things can be seen!

Don't pull me! All four of you, stop pulling!

Why do I have to taste the sensation of being fished out of the water when all I came to do was relax in the bath?!

AAAAAAAAAHHHHH!!

Chapter 131: Interlude – Know your place

At the time when Haine-san and the others had probably finished their objective, I -Yorishiro-received a visitor.

“Doraha.” (Yorishiro)

“Yes, Yorishiro-sama.” (Doraha)

I spoke to Doraha, who has been at my side at all times lately.

Thanks to her being at my side, I haven’t felt lonely lately.

I felt as if I had returned to the time before I was reborn, the time when I was Izanami, but having her at my side right now would trouble me.

“Please leave me alone for a while. Until I say it is okay, don’t let anyone enter the room.” (Yorishiro)

“Understood.” (Doraha)

The obedient Doraha left my room immediately. The sound of the closing door was the last sound to be made before my surroundings were enveloped in silence.

“...How long are you planning on staying hidden? You crept your way here because you had business with me, right?” (Yorishiro)

When I said this, at the wall of the room, I saw something small crawling.

With 4 legs and a long tail, it looked like a lizard. But if I had to give an image in that type of animal, it would be more accurate to call it a newt.

Its skin was viscous, and it looked like it had plenty of moisture.

In other words, it was quite similar to that of a newt, a small sized water element monster.

“Water God, Coacervate.” (Yorishiro)

I could tell at a glance.

A corner of the four Base Elements. Within that group, the one who is self-proclaimed the most shrewd, a treacherous and scheming God.

It is exactly because I am a God that I can sense that this small newt holds the soul of a God inside of it.

“You have appeared in quite the minuscule being this time around. After having your former body destroyed by Haine-san, the creation of a new body didn’t make it in time huh.” (Yorishiro)

“Light Goddess, Inflation-sama. It has been centuries since we last met.” (Coacervate)

The newt –more accurately speaking, the Water God Coacervate that had incarnated in the newt-shaped monster was speaking to me in a repulsive manner.

“To think you had once again incarnated as a human, moreover, as the Light Founder that is under your religion. If you had told me, I would have immediately ordered my Water Church to provide you a variety of pleasantries.” (Coacervate)

“Did you appear before me just to say that? Even going through the trouble of appearing as a weak and unsightly lizard?” (Yorishiro)

“How harsh! Well then, let’s enter straight into the reason.” (Coacervate)

The newt changed its tone of voice.

“The Mother Earth God Mantle has been erased.” (Coacervate)

It wasn’t in a loud voice, but his tone was firm, and it gave out an aura that properly told of how important those words were.

“...Must have. The Micro Black Hole that Haine-san released, its gravity wave reached all the way here. If he used that, it would be strange if at least one God hasn’t been erased.” (Yorishiro)

“This is not the time to be so carefree! A God! A God has disappeared! One of the five Creation Gods that are supposed to be immortal since the Genesis era!!” (Coacervate)

The small newt was speaking to me in the thought frequency that only Gods can share.

This God’s voice, whether it is through the air or through the mind, is quite

the pain in the ears.

“To think that the Dark God Entropy would resort to such violent actions! As I thought, that God is outside our understanding! The things he does will—!”
(Coacervate)

“Destroy the balance of the world, and in the end, he might even make it collapse. A dangerous and evil God that can’t be controlled—is what you want to say, right?” (Yorishiro)

“Wa?! Hah?!” (Coacervate)

“Now that it has come to this, we should gather the remaining five Gods at once, fight together just like in the Genesis era, defeat Entropy, and seal him once again. That is what you want to say, right? Water God, Coacervate.”
(Yorishiro)

“Yes, yes! That’s exactly right! As expected of the Light Goddess! You already hold the same idea as me—!” (Coacervate)

“And what about it?” (Yorishiro)

My decisive words made Coacervate gulp down his breath.

And then, an aura drifted about.

“It is true that the Dark God Entropy—right, he is currently the human Kuromiya Haine-san, it is true that he brought an end to one of the corners of the five Gods of Creation, Mother Earth God Mantle. And? What about it?”
(Yorishiro)

“Hah?! Uhm...!” (Coacervate)

“You must have thought this was your chance, right Coacervate? After the troublesome Entropy was unsealed, you wanted to somehow deal with him, but you alone can’t do anything against him. You needed the Light Goddess, who possesses an absolute advantage towards the dark element, into your side or you won’t be able to do anything.” (Yorishiro)

But the four Base Elements and me have practically cut off all relations since several centuries ago with the matter of the Dark Underworld Country.

Our relationship has completely stopped being the kind that they can just

nonchalantly ask me for cooperation.

Even so, if Mantle has been erased, this is an important matter that can shake all the Gods. He must have thought that I as the Light Goddess Inflation would see this matter as grave and would forget about the past incidents to take hands once again to defeat Entropy.

For you, the erasure of Mantle must have been a perfect chance to change the current state of affairs.

“I will say it again. Even if a God has been erased, what about it?” (Yorishiro)

“...”

Coacervate was still unable to speak. That’s why I hammered it down myself.

“This world already has no need for Gods. That’s why, even if Gods die or live, those kind of things don’t matter anymore. No, if there’s Gods that bring harm to the humans and the world, destroying them would actually be considered a good action. Entropy has...” (Yorishiro)

Entropy has...

“Done the right thing.” (Yorishiro)

“Impossible! There’s no way that’s true! Killing a God! Is there anything more evil than that?!” (Coacervate)

“Foolish Coacervate. Calling yourself a tactician, you must think you know everything in the world, but it looks like you don’t know one important thing.” (Yorishiro)

“?! And what is that?!” (Coacervate)

“The Dark God Entropy...is the one who stands at the top of the six Gods. Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, and even Light was born from the abyss of darkness. That’s why he has the right to erase what he has created himself if he doesn’t like it. And the embodiment of that authority is his Black Hole.” (Yorishiro)

A hole of darkness that destroys everything.

From what I have seen, even the light divine power that is supposed to hold an absolute advantage over the dark element is no enemy of the Black Hole.

Before the light's power reaches the super compressed dark matter core of the Black Hole, the gravity that originates from it would catch the light, it would be forever caught inside its

[schwarzschild radius](#).

There's no one who can stop an Entropy that seriously decides to destroy the world.

"But he is kind. He wouldn't just immediately decide to erase someone just because they don't meet his likes, he wouldn't do something narrow-minded..... Coacervate, you are an idiot, so you misunderstood Entropy's kindness for stupidity." (Yorishiro)

Rampaging as much as he wanted around a kind person like that, he stepped on the humans Entropy treasured most, and then, laughed at him, and not only did he held him in contempt, he has also learned now that he can erase Gods as well.

At this late in time, I can't even laugh at how stupid you are.

"Coacervate, along with that wild joy of yours, you are also feeling fear, right? Without even knowing that Entropy can erase you, you have acted violently towards him many times. His bottle of patience might be breaking already." (Yorishiro)

That's why even his annoying way of speaking where he mixes in questions all the time has disappeared as well.

That's how much composure he is lacking right now.

"And in truth, even Mantle who is the most forgivable one of them all, wasn't shown any mercy." (Yorishiro)

"Inflation! Light Goddess, Inflation-sama!!" (Coacervate)

"Coacervate, you self-proclaimed tactician that misguided humans and had them killed pointlessly, the reason why you are playing around with humans even in this era where prayer energy is drying up is because you have already created a system similar to Mantle that would forcefully extract the spirit energy from humans, right?" (Yorishiro)

‘When the prayer energy is finally at a state where it is not enough, I can just use that system to wring out those prayers’, is what he must have been thinking.

The monsters and the people of the Church must have been things he did to entertain himself in the time he was creating this system.

Water God, Coacervate.

“...However, Mantle, who had executed that system, was erased by Entropy. Coacervate, if you want to walk the same end as her, do what she did.”
(Yorishiro)

In time, the prayers will dry up and they won’t be enough.

The last means that the Water God must have prepared, there’s no doubt that it would ignite the wrath of the Dark God.

In other words, the fate that is waiting the Water God are two: to be silently forgotten by the humans and disappears, or to be crushed by the anger of a God and be destroyed.

“Light Goddess! Inflation-sama! Please!!” (Coacervate)

A pathetic cry came out from the small newt.

“Please save me! I have angered Entropy many times! That’s why he won’t forgive me! But I don’t want to disappear, I don’t want to disappear!! Please, Light Goddess, Mother of all Gods!! Please save me! Please protect me from the fiendish Dark God!!” (Coacervate)

“A God is praying to a God?” (Yorishiro)

Even though you have been playing around with the people that have offered you prayers?

“Shameless was a word that was created to describe you, Water God Coacervate. There’s no one as stupid as you at misunderstanding their own intelligence. The stupid you probably couldn’t notice. The person that you have angered with your follies, did you think that it was only Entropy?!” (Yorishiro)

“Please save me, Inflation! Please!” (Coacervate)

“Get lost. Just listening to your voice is already becoming a nuisance. I will give you one last advice. If you hate disappearing that much, go hide in the depths of the sea or something. Throw away your pride as a God, and if you cling onto the small prayers that humans pour onto you, you should be able to exist minutely as a small being.” (Yorishiro)

“Inflation-sama! Our mother—” (Coacervate)

A surge of light divine power made a *splat* noise and blew into pieces the small monster.

The unpleasant noise disappeared and silence returned to the room.

Coacervate shouldn't be able to do anything anymore.

No matter what kind of tricks he makes up, the courage to win against the fear of being erased by the Dark God Entropy -by Haine-san- is already gone from that fool.

I feel like a weight on my shoulders has decreased by one more.

After that, I called back Doraha who was outside the room, and for a while, I passed my time holding her between my arms.